

HE WOULD BE A SOLDIER

3
C O M E D Y

IN FIVE ACTS.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL,
COVENT-GARDEN.

WRITTEN BY

FREDERICK PHILON.

THE FOURTH EDITION.

D U B L I N:

PRINTED IN THE YEAR

M, DCC, LXXXVII.

THE WOULD BE A SOLDIER

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IN FIVE ACTS

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL

CONVENT-DU-ROY



WRITTEN

BY ERIC PHILIP

THE FOURTH EDITION

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1854

P R O L O G U E.

WRITTEN BY THE AUTHOR OF THE COMEDY,
AND SPOKEN BY MR. FARREN.

PROLOGUES were first plain, simple bills of fare;
You just were told your entertainment there.
Without parade. or aim at brilliant hit,
Genius was thrifty then, as rich as wit.
Our modern bards a different plan pursue,
And a fair outside always hold to view;
With point and jest the prologue still must play,
And strike each insect folly of the day.
But folly now unstricken, wild may fly,
For the muse wasts a fav'rite to the sky:
Can little objects charm or fill the mind,
When Howard's claims are known to all mankind?
Distance and clime in him excite no fears;
He visits dungeons, and the sick bed cheers;
Fearless of danger, nobly on he goes,
Round the whole globe, to heal the wretches' woes;
Brother to all who like himself had birth,
He walks his Maker's messenger on earth;
And in the monument his country rears,
That country a divided glory shares.
To a great people, thus to merit true.
Why for our bard shou'd we protection sue?
Worth still you foster; and where faults are found,
You probe to heal, and not enlarge the wound.
The reason strong that guides your ev'ry aim,
Cancels or seals disinterested fame.
If English genius, soaring eagle high
All nations, drops still in a lower sky,
It is because the sons of fame well know.
The praise that's worth ambition, you bestow.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Colonel Talbot,	Mr. AICKEN.
Sir Oliver Oldstock,	Mr. QUICK.
Captain Crevelt,	Mr. LEWIS.
Mandeville,	Mr. FARREN.
Count Pierpoint,	Mr. WEWITZER.
Wilkins,	Mr. FEARON.
Caleb,	Mr. EDWIN.
Amber,	Mr. THOMPSON.
Johnson,	Mr. BROWN.
Servant to Colonel,	Mr. HELME.
Charlotte,	Mrs. POPE.
Lady Oldstock,	Mrs. WEBB.
Harriet,	Mrs. WELLS.
Mrs. Wilkins,	Mrs. BROWN.
Betty,	Miss. STUART.
Nancy,	Miss. ROWSON.

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ACT I.

SCENE I. *A Street.*

Enter Mrs. Wilkins, followed by Johnson.

Mrs. Wilkins.

THERE's no such thing as stirring out of doors for the fellows now-a days.—I beg, Sir, you wou'd not follow me any farther.

Johnson. I cannot leave you, my sweet, divine, charming girl!

Mrs. Wil. To how many, now, have you repeated the same lesson before you met me this morning?

Johns. To how many! Were a dozen such fine women as yourself to appear every day in public, there would be no such thing as walking the streets for you; a man should have a piece of flint in his breast.

Mrs. Wil. He's a good handsome fellow, and doesn't talk badly.—Then you will persist in following me?

Johns. How can I help it? I follow a fine woman by instinct.—Do, my dear, kind, cruel angel, tell me where you live. *(Takes hold of her hand.)*

Mrs. Wil. But to what purpose? I can never see you?

Johns. Why not, my love!

Mrs. Wil. Lord, I am an old married woman! *(Faint-*

ly struggling to disengage her hand.) You wicked devil, leave me. The neighbours will take notice, and I shall get a bad name by you.—Do go—I'm just at home.

Johns. But which is the house you live at?

Mrs. Wil. I can't tell you—besides, I think I see my husband talking to the orange woman at the door; in the straw hat and scarlet cloak, with a little curly-pole boy in her hand, eating ginger-bread.

Johns. Why, that's the George inn. 'Sdeath! do you live there?

Mrs. Wil. Oh, you devil! I shall be ruin'd if ever you come after me.

Johns. Zounds! it's the very house I was going to.—Isn't it kept by one Jacob Wilkins?

Mrs. Wil. Yes, it is.

Johns. We're quite at home now.—I suppose you're old Jacob's daughter.

Mrs. Wil. I happen to be old Jacob's wife, tho'.

Johns. Pray, my dear, how long have you been married?

Mrs. Wil. A long time, Sir.

Johns. Not a long time, I am sure, from your looks.

Mrs. Wil. Looks are very deceitful, especially these of married folks. I was married Candlemas day, five—long—months.

Johns. Poor creature! you have had a tedious time of it.

Mrs. Wil. But what's your business with Jacob Wilkins? Can't I do it:

Johns. Then you do Jacob's business sometimes?

Mrs. Wil. To be sure I do, when he's out of the way. Poor man! it's a great relief to him.

Johns. But this is a matter on which I must see himself.—Col. Talbot, a gentleman of whom I think you must have heard, if you be Wilkins' wife, has wrote to him, and desired I would see him in consequence of that letter: were you at home when he received it?

Mrs. Wil. No, I was not, Sir: but I have often heard of Col. Talbot: he's an Oxfordshire gentleman: his family, I hear, was the making of Wilkins. Lord! he has

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been a long time in the Indies, and, I'm told, has made a power of money. But is he come here, Sir?

Johns. He is; and since his return has been down in Oxfordshire, in search of Wilkins, where he thought he still lived; and would have come here himself now, only he's very much indisposed.

Mrs. Wil. Bless your heart! Jacob Wilkins has been in town, and kept the George ion these ten years.

Johns. He has made a very ungrateful return to his benefactor, Col. Talbot. My master thought him dead, not having heard from him so many years: a conduct that was unpardonable, considering his obligations to the Colonel, and the great trust reposed in him.

Mrs. Wil. Great trust! Lord, Sir! what was it?

Johns. Why, Colonel Talbot left a son in his care—but come along, and I'll tell you the whole story by the way.

Mrs. Wil. We must not be seen together for the world; my husband is as jealous as the vengeance. Take a turn down this next street, and let me go home alone. Follow me in about ten minutes; but take care you don't speak to me as if you had seen me before.

Johns. My dear Mrs. Wilkins, what do you take me for? Do you suppose I never paid a visit to a married woman in my life?

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *The Bar of the George Inn.*

Enter Caleb followed by Wilkins, who appears greatly agitated.

Caleb. What do you knock me about for at this rate? Don't I slave like a horse from morning till night? I wish I had gone for a soldier as my brother did!

Wil. Your brother, you dog! I wish I had never seen either of your faces.—What shall I do I have no son to restore him! [*Bell rings violently.*]

Ca. Coming! coming!—There's a bill wanted in the General Elliot.

Wil. Let them wait.

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Ca. But suppose they won't wait, who'll pay off the score?

Wil. Out of my sight, firrah, or I'll pay off your score—
Don't you see my temper is ruffled?

Ca. Yes, and I feel it too. (*Bell rings.*) Coming!
coming up, Sir! [*Exit.*]

Enter Mrs. Wilkins.

Mrs. Wil. My dear Mr. Wilkins, what's the matter?
The whole house seems turned topsy-turvy.

Wil. I am ruin'd.

Mrs. Wil. Ruin'd! Oh, heaven forbid!

Wil. I say, woman, I'm undone; and the sooner I'm out
of England, the better,

Mrs. Wil. Lord, lord! you terrify me out of my wits,
Jacob!

Wil. Suppose the best friend you had in the world had
entrusted an only child to your care, and that thro' neglect
you had lost him, what wou'd you have to say for yourself?

Mrs. Wil. And is that your case, my dear?

Wil. It is.

Mrs. Wil. But tell me how it happen'd.

Wil. You have frequently heard me make mention of
Colonel Talbot, in whose family I was brought up?

Mrs. Wil. To be sure I have.

Wil. It is a son of his I have lost.

Mrs. Wil. You astonish me! But how came so great a
man's son to be left in your care?

Wil. Why, you must know that Colonel Talbot, previ-
ous to his going abroad, was privately married to a beautiful
girl; who waited on his mother: he had a son by this girl;
and as the child came into the world just as he was obliged
to embark with the army for Portugal, the war before last,
he left him in my care, desiring me to let him pass for my
own till his return; and in case he was kill'd, to continue
the deception till the death of his father.

Mrs. Wil. And has the Colonel never been in Eng-
land since

Wil. Never till within these few days; therefore his

son continued with me till he was twelve years old, when I lost him.

Mrs. Wil. In what manner did you lose him.

Wil. I cannot be certain : but, as he was a boy of great spirit, and ever prattling of being a soldier, I suspect he was inveigled off by a recruiting party, which at that time was beating up for men in the village.

Mrs. Wil. Didn't you acquaint his mother immediately with what had happen'd?

Wil. She was dead.

Mrs. Wil. You wrote to the Colonel to be sure.

Wil. There I was to blame. I cou'dn't summon up resolution sufficient. I thought he wou'd have attributed the child's leaving me to neglect, or cruel treatment.

Mrs. Wil. The best advice I can give you is, to tell Colonel Talbot his son is dead.

Wil. But how shall I produce a certificate of that? Should he examine the parish register, and no record of such a child's death be found, I shou'd be taken up, and tried on a suspicion of murder.

Mrs. Wil. Then tell him the truth at once.

Wil. Worse and worse!—He'll suppose this a mere invention of my own, to screen my villany; else, why was I silent so long? and that I had been brib'd by his relations to remove an obstacle to their inheriting both his acquir'd and paternal fortune.

Enter Calc.

Ca. There's a gentleman from Colonel Talbot desires to see you.

Wil. What's to be done?—I dare not face him!

Ca. What shall I say to him, father?

Wil. Was there ever any thing so provoking—as this fellow?

Mrs. Wil. I have it.—Shew him into the parlour, my good boy; and tell him, Mr. Wilkins will be with him presently, my good boy!

Ca. "My good boy!"—Ecod, she good-boys me to

some tune this morning; I hope there's no mischief in the wind; for I'm sure those are the first good words I have had from her since she was my stepmother. [Exit Caleb.

Mrs. Wil. How old is your son Caleb?

Wil. There's only a week difference between his age and young Talbot's.

Mrs. Wil. Pass him on the Colonel for his son.

Wil. How!

Mrs. Wil. Put a good face on the matter, and you'll not only slip your neck out of a halter, but make your fortune. I can turn Caleb round my finger. Go and speak to this gentleman, and let him know you'll introduce young Mr. Talbot to him immediately. Do as I bid you, and leave the management of the rest of the business to me.

Wil. But what reason shall I give for not writing to him so long?

Mrs. Wil. You must say you never received one of his letters; and your quitting the country, will make it probable enough they might have miscarried.

Wil. Then to give his son no better education!

Mrs. Wil. You must say he wou'd not take any better; and you may find instances enow of as dull heirs to large estates, to give colour to your story.

Wil. And make a drawer of him too!

Mrs. Wil. Well, he'll not be the first great man that has cried, "Coming up, Sir!"—What do you stand confounded for? Away, away, man; and let me break the matter to Caleb

Wil. It goes against my conscience—but self preservation will have it so. [Exit Wilkins.

Mrs. Wil. (Alone.) Now have I my gentleman under my thumb—whenever his tongue wags with the sound of jealousy, I'll threaten to discover upon him—and I'll see my dear, sweet fellow, who follow'd me home to-day, as often as I please.—But to prepare this great booby—Oh, here he comes.

Enter Caleb.

Ca. Here, mother, I have brought you the bill.

Mrs. Wil. Well, never mind the bill—I have something very particular to say to you,—Do you know, Caleb, that your father is a man of the first character in this town?

Ca. To be sure he is, for selling the best old port and sherry in the kingdom.

Mrs. Wil. But come, sit down, and listen to me. (*They sit.*)

Ca. What signifies hearing so much about father's character—who gets him that character? Why, Caleb,—Is there one in the house fit to talk to a gentleman but myself?

Mrs. Wil. My dear Caleb, let me intreat you to hear me.

Ca. Dear Caleb!—Yes, I'd listen to you all day for such words as these; good words are sugar plumbs to me: besides, mother, you can't think how pretty, folks look when they are pleas'd.

Mrs. Wil. Do you know, Caleb, whose son you are?

Ca. Whose son I am! My father's, to be sure.

Mrs. Wil. Certainly: but that father is not Jacob Wilkins.

Ca. No!

Mrs. Wil. Colonel Talbot, the great nabob just arrived from the Indies, is your father.

Ca. My godfather, I suppose you mean.

Mrs. Wil. I tell you he's your own father. You were given when an infant to my husband, and he was ordered to bring you up as his son; it being necessary for family reasons, which you'll know another time, to conceal your birth.

Ca. I always thought I was a better man's son than I appeared to be.—But, mother, isn't this all a joke?

Mrs. Wil. Can my husband convince you that I am in earnest?

Ca. He has often convinc'd me that he himself was in earnest, as my shoulders can witness.

Mrs. Wil. But, dear Sir, I beg ten thousand pardons for keeping my seat so long. (*Getting up, and curtsying*)

very low.—Caleb keeps his seat, with a vacant stare, and chuckling laugh of joy.)

Ca. I thought I'd come to something at last.

Mrs. Wil. Your father's gentleman, Sir, is now waiting to see you.

Ca. My father's gentleman!—I suppose I shall have a gentleman too.

Mrs. Wil. Oh, no doubt.

Ca. Then there will be a pair of us.—But you're sure now you are in earnest?

Mrs. Wil. Will you go and be convinc'd I am?

Ca. Come along, Mrs. Wilkins;—I think that's your name.

Mrs. Wil. At your Honor's service.

Ca. Great men are apt to forget such trifles—but I'll call and see you now and then, tho' I am a Colonel's son.

Mrs. Wil. We'll always think there's nothing too good at the George inn for your Honor.

Ca. But hark'e, give old Jacob a hint not to forget himself and make too free.

Mrs. Wil. I hope, Sir, we shall never forget ourselves in your presence.

Ca. Well, well, I hope not, good woman.—A colonel's son!—What a fool I must be, not to have found out this of my own accord!—But it's a wise child knows its own father.

[Exeunt. Mrs. Wilkins ridiculing him.]

SCENE, a drawing Room at the House of Sir Oliver Oldstock.

Enter Charlotte and Harriet.

Char. How you teize me about this all-accomplished Sir Charles!—I can't abide him!

Har. Can't abide him!—I don't think it possible for any woman actually to dislike him.

Char. Yes, he's the last person breathing I shou'd elect for my *caro sposo*; the man's well enough as an acquaintance; he's lively; does not want for understanding: but the best of him is, the talent he possesses for discovering

the ridiculous, wherever it is to be found—then he paints it in colours so high, and so pleasantly ill natur'd, that a woman takes him in her suite, as the natural appendage of superior understanding; to shew that her wit has rais'd her above the power of ridicule, and that she has the chief laughers in town upon her own side.

Har. What you praise him for, is, in my mind, the only exceptionable part of his character.

Char. Lord! what harm is there in a little good, humour'd ill-nature?—Besides, what would you have people talk of when they meet? As politics are to the men scandal is to our sex—these two subjects are the vast magazines of the major part of our ideas; between them the heads of half the nation are furnish'd.

Har. Have you seen Mandeville to-day?

Char. Poor Harriet! now do I perceive the cause of all this extraordinary zeal for the interests of the handsome Baronet; you still are apprehensive, if you don't provide me with a husband, I shall take your beloved Mandeville from you.

Har. He is sole heir to Colonel Talbot's immense fortune, I know your father will proceed to the last extremities.

Char. Dear Harriet, rest perfectly satisfied in my friendship for you; I never will have him: I don't know what I would not do to avoid it; My heart is at present a virgin tablet, on which Love has not written a single character; however, should things come to the worst, you yourself must be my deliverer.

Har. As how?

Char. Ev'n by taking wing with your beloved swain, for that blessed spot, where law forgoes no fetters for the heart; and Hymen, with a smile upon his cheek, and his torch burning clear, lights consenting votaries to the temple of real and lasting felicity.—Heaven, and a generous uncle be prais'd, who bequeath'd me ten thousand pounds independent of my father, I am not oblig'd to sacrifice my own, and my friend's happiness!—O, glorious independence!—thou parent of every virtue!—no wonder so many noble hearts emptied their crimson fountains to preserve thee!

Har. I'm asham'd, Charlotte, to have harbour'd a sus-

pcion, but for a moment, that a mind like your's cou'd act unworthy of itself.

Char. Now to put my theory into practice.—Here comes Mandeville; do you step into the next room, where you may overhear our conversation, and you shall be entertain'd with a prologue truly antimatrimonial.

Har. Dear Charlotte, I am already perfectly satisfied.

Char. But I insist on your going; it will entertain you. [Exit Har.]

Enter Mandeville.

Char. My dear Mandeville! I was just wishing for you; if you had staid much longer, I shou'd have been insupportable vapour'd; nothing runs in my head but our marriage; But I was thinking, as the fondest couples have certain dull hours that hang heavy upon their hands, how we two shall kill time during those spiritless seasons.

Man. I suppose we shall follow the example of other people; do all we can to make one another uneasy.

Char. That's one way, to be sure, of killing time; but we shall grow tired of that at last; don't you think so, Mandeville?

Man. When I entertain a good opinion of a lady's wit, it rids me of all apprehension on that score.

Char. Sir, your most obedient.

Man. I thought your cousin Harriet was here.

Char. My cousin Harriet!—Lord! what's my cousin Harriet to the purpose?—I shall grow jealous of you, at this rate.—I wonder, Mandeville, what star shed its influence when our marriage was first talk'd of; no two people breathing agreed better.

Man. I always thought you the pleasantest companion imaginable.

Char. We were continually laughing at one body's expense or another.

Man. And as soon as we are married, I fancy every body will be even with us.

Char. Heigho!

Man. What's that for, Madam?

Char. Not for a husband, I assure you ; it was only a requiem to friendship, going to be laid in the grave of matrimony. Methinks we two are preparing ourselves for the penance of our future union, as knights-errant of old prepar'd themselves for the toils of chivalry. I've read somewhere, that those champions of distress'd damsels at first wore heavy weights to their armour, which they fancied, on removal, would give a comparative lightness to the galling load with which they were about to tax their shoulders.

Enter Harriet.

Har. Just now, Mr. Mandeville, as I parted from my cousin, a servant came and told me that your uncle, Colonel Talbot, was arriv'd.—Your father, Charlotte, has receiv'd a letter from him.—But what do you think ? It seems he has a son nobody ever heard of before.

Char. A son !—Now, Mandeville, if you can be content with your mistress, and a moderate income, I'm satisfied you may have her ; as the bulk of Colonel Talbot's fortune will certainly devolve to his son, depend upon it, my father will no more press my ladyship on your worship.

Man. Madam, my uncle may dispose of his property as he pleases—I sincerely rejoice at his safe arrival in England ; and as he has an heir, I shall be the first to congratulate him on the event ; and I hope that heir may prove an heir to his virtues.

Char. You are a generous fellow, Mandeville ; and, if it did not cost you so dear, I shou'd congratulate you on the certain prospect you may indulge, that we two shall never be one.

Man. My dear Harriet—

Char. Now, why don't you say, my dear Mandeville ? One as naturally follows the other as the echo does the sound.

Man. The occasion, ladies, I trust, will apologize for my leaving you thus abruptly.

Char. Oh, go, go ; you have my ample consent.—But, Harriet, will you let him go so easily ?

Har. How can you be so ill natur'd ?

Char. She says she gives you leave to go : but it's on condition that you do not dedicate a second of your time to any human being but herself, longer then common decency requires it.—But Mandeville, do you and I part as we ought, a betrothed pair !

Man. Yes, Charlotte ; for we part wedded friends again.

Manent Harriet and Charlotte.

Char. Now, Harriet, are all your apprehensions removed?

Har. They are, my friend ; Hope sits smiling at my heart, and once more cheers it with a prospect of happiness. [Exeunt.]

End of the first Act.

ACT II.

SCENE, an Apartment at Sir Oliver Oldstock's.

Enter Sir Oliver (alone.)

THIS is a devilish lucky hit, the Colonel's having a son ; it enables me to provide for both my niece and daughter—I expect from the latter a good deal of contradiction in this business, but I like that I shou'dn't love her half so much as I do, if she hadn't spirit enough to contradict me—it shews she has an opinion of her own, and gives me an opportunity to prove that I have one also ; but of a much superior kind, and, upon occasions, of a very coercive quality ; it's one time in a hundred I can get any body to contradict me ; but men of large independant fortunes never hear the truth—nobody has spirit enough to oppose them in discourse—Henceforward, I am determined to take no man by the hand, who does not speak and look, when we come to debate, as if he wou'd knock me down in an argument. Well I think I shall be as happy as a married man can be, when my girls are disposed of—my wife, to be sure, has a most unaccountable humour ; to suppose I'm jealous of her

now she's in her fifty-fifth year—to do Lady Lucretia Oldstock justice, she was once a charming woman; but at present, I think her as plain a *piece of goods*, as a man could meet between Temple-Bar and Whitechapel—Here she comes, brimfull of news.

Enter Lady Oldstock.

La. Old. Was ever any thing so wonderful!

Sir O. Nothing upon earth! what's the matter, my love?

La. Old. Why, haven't you heard that Colonel Talbot has a son?

Sir O. A son!—a dozen, I dare be sworn, if he wou'd but own them; an old soldier has generally children in all quarters of the globe.

La. Old. Sir Oliver, you're a censorious man, and judge of every body by yourself.

Sir O. Upon my soul, my dear, you allow me too much credit; I never was a man of all that gallantry; no, no; I had a domestic magnet that attracted, and fix'd all my affections; united to such a woman as Lady Oldstock, who could be a rover?

La. Old. Why, to do you justice, Sir Oliver, you have, upon the whole, made a very good husband; and if it was not for the weakness of your temper in one particular, we might live very happily.

Sir O. (*Aside.*) Now she's off.

La. Old. If, indeed, I was one of the giddy flirts of the day, it would be another thing—but a woman, of whose truth you have had so many years experience, to be jealous!

Sir O. I tell you again, and again, I am not jealous.

La. Old. Ah, Sir Oliver! I wish you wou'd make your words good; if any man of the least tolerable appearance pays me a common mark of respect, don't you immediately sneer, and say that fellow has a design upon you?

Sir O. So I do: I always think that person has a design upon another, to whom he gives their own way in every thing; no, no; if I am to chuse a friend, and an a-

agreeable companion, give me the honest fellow who contradicts me.

La. Old. Then you are not jealous?

Sir O. No.

La. Old. No?

Sir O. No; damme if ever I was jealous of you!

La. Old. You are now more provoking, if possible, than ever; when you find I hold your ridiculous suspicious in contempt, you would wound me another way, and mortify my pride, by insinuating, that I never had attractions sufficient to have a civil thing said to me, like other women.

Sir O. Then it seems, my Lady, you have had your civil things said to you, like other women, in your time?

La. Old. There, there it broke forth! What it is to be married to a jealous husband!

Sir O. Well, all this I can bear, because I like contradiction—I consider the mind like a spring; the more you press it, the more vigour you lend to its elasticity; since I can remember, I always delighted to be of a different opinion from other people—There's something wonderfully flattering to human pride in being singular—but in marriage it is absolutely necessary—man and wife are like the contending qualities of bitter and sweet; they naturally quarrel, and exist by downright opposition.

Enter Charlotte.

La. Old. I'll submit my cause to the judgement of Charlotte.

Char. Submit your cause to my judgement! my dear ma'am, by no means; in all cases of matrimonial litigation, the parties should be tried by their peers.

Sir O. Right, my girl! now in order to qualify you to be impanelled on suits of the kind, I was that moment thinking about moving the court of Hymen, to shew cause why a rule should not be granted to provide you with a husband.

La. Old. Whenever you marry, Charlotte, if you wish

to be happy, above all things avoid a temper like your father's.

Sir O. And like your mother's also, if you wish your husband to be happy.

La. Old. I clearly perceive my company is not agreeable.

Sir O. Your strange turn of mind, I confess, Lady Oldstock, is not altogether so agreeable; but you see it does not make me angry.

La. Old. It's that that tortures me—if I cou'd vex him, it wou'd be a proof I had some power left; but he treats me like a child.

[Exit Lady Oldstock.]

Sir O. It's a spoilt one, if I do.

Char. Dear Sir, let me follow her.

Sir O. You shan't budge a step after her—Soothing her in these humours is only adding fuel to fire. Your mother, Charlotte, was born a coquette, and will die one. She was a reigning toast in her youth, and to this hour expects the adulation of those days. She had a whole army of lovers; and, what you'll say ought to make me set a very high value upon her indeed, either from necessity, or choice, she hung like an overblown rose on the virgin thorn, full four and thirty years waiting for me. But come, sit down, and let me talk to you. (*They sit.*) I have for some time back observed, Char'otte, that the match I propos'd to you with Mandeville, does not meet your wishes.

Char. I confess, Sir, it never did—besides I know that gentleman's affections to be engaged elsewhere.

Sir O. I understand you; he's fond of my niece, Harriet; well, in the name of happiness let them go together; I'll never mention his name to you again; nor indeed shall I propose any match to you, upon which I may expect rational contradiction.

Char. Now, Sir, you speak like my father—Oh, how my heart springs with gratitude and joy, to hear those generous words from your own lips!

Sir O. No, my girl, you shall never be sacrificed at the altar of Plutus—I say sacrificed—for, what is it, in fact, but a sacrifice, to throw away a fine young woman upon a

man it is impossible she should like ; as many father's do every day, who love money more than their children.

Char. The liberality of these sentiments delight me, they are so exactly in conformity with my own ! Dear Sir, you have given me such spirits—Do you know, when you ask'd me to sit down, I expected to have a quite different kind of conversation with you ?

Sir O. I suppose you thought I had a golden calf to propose to you for a husband ?

Char. I own I was so ungenerous.

Sir O. A fellow with nothing but gold in his pocket, and lead in his pate ; ha, ha, ha !

Char. Ha, ha, ha !

Sir O. How liable we are to be mistaken in our surmises of other people's thoughts ! No, no, my girl, I have no such match to propose to you—I have a husband for you, it is true, in my eye ; and a rich one too—but it is not to riches you object—it is to the man ; and provided he be agreeable, I imagine no woman in her senses can suppose a husband may be too rich ?

Char. Provided riches be obtained without leaving a stain upon the principles, it is happiness to possess them, as they give us so much more ample power of distributing felicity. I never was that romantic fool to imagine there can be happiness where there is not independency : grant me that, and all the wealth beside which the earth contains or the sea devours, shou'd not bribe me to sell the free election of my heart, or barter for gold, what gold could never restore me.

Sir O. Give me a kiss, you jade ! you are your father's own daughter ; but every body tells me you're the picture of me ; and if the Colonel's son be but as like his father as you are yours, you'll be the handsomest couple in Great Britain.

Char. (*Rising.*) The Colonel's son, Sir !

Sir O. Yes, my old friend, Colonel Talbot's son ; one of the finest young fellows I am told—but no fop—he has none of the vices and follies of your young butterflies of fashion.

Char. No, Sir, nor any of their accomplishments, or I'm misinformed.

Sir O. It was an excellent thought of his father's, to have him brought up in a snug, private way.

Char. And yet, I'm told he has lived some time in a snug public way.

Sir O. What, Charlotte have you been listening to any scandalous reports of the youth?

Char. A pretty youth I understand he is for the husband of your daughter—I am told he was actually a waiter at some horrid place near Smithfield.

Sir O. Oh, infamous scandal!—He a waiter at some horrid place near Smithfield!—The next report, I suppose, will be, that you were bar maid at the same place; and that I'm an o'd tobacconist, who supplied the house with cut and dry, from the sign of the Black Boy in a neighbouring alley.

Char. I am petrified at the very thoughts of the brute!

Sir O. Look you there now: she knows I love contradiction in my heart, and therefore seems averse to the match, because she thinks it will please me. But, come; you and your mother and my niece shall go pay the Colonel and his son a morning visit.

Char. Sir, as you insist upon it, I will go as I wou'd to see any other great natural curiosity.

Sir O. Was ever any thing like this! she has heard a scandalous report of a man, and she won't wait to be undeceived by her own eyes and her own ears; this is downright unconvincible obstinacy, not rational, well founded contradiction; and I hate the one as much as I love the other; besides, I ever thought you a girl of too much sense to lay any kind of stress on a tale of mere Rumour.

Char. But, if Rumour shou'd speak truth?

Sir O. He's so great a liar, I wou'd not believe him.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE, an Apartment at Mandeville's.

Enter Johnson and Colonel Talbot.

Johns. He's a rough diamond, Sir ; he requires a little polishing, I must confess.

Col. Good masters may remove his ignorance, and good company polish his manners : but there is a meanness in the turn of his person, and the cast of his features, which is insuperable ; but take man in every point of view, and he will be found the creature of habit ; his body, like his mind, is subdued by education.

Johns. I wonder, Sir, you never wrote to any particular friend in England, to have inquir'd about him, when you receiv'd no letter from this man, to whose care you committed him.

Col. Who cou'd I trust ? None of my own family !—Then, what solid friendships do you suppose are contracted at the age I left England ? I was then but twenty ; all my intimates were young fellows, sunk in pleasure and dissipation ; if any thing like friendship had subsisted between us, the many years we were asunder had dissolv'd the tie—His mother, I knew, was dead ; and from Wilkin's silence, I concluded that he also had paid the debt of nature ; therefore I desisted from writing, thinking it was in vain to hope for any certainty till I had myself reached Eng'land.

Johns. I shou'd not have believ'd it possible your Honor cou'd have had such a son, let his education be what may.

Col. I own, Johnson, the weakness of a father induc'd me to believe I shou'd have seen him emerging from the low contracted sphere to which his fate had consign'd him, by the native energy of his own powers ; and flatter'd myself with the pleasing dream of surprising a young man with affluence and distinction, who in obscurity had acquir'd virtue to deserve them.

Johns. I beg your Honor's pardon :—but as I cannot see the least likeness of you in this young gentleman's face, I suppose he resembled his mother.

Col. His mother :—She had the countenance of an angel !

Johns. Then he differs from you both most devilishly ?—But, Sir, the sooner you provide him with a fencing and a dancing master the better ; the latter of these gentlemen

seems indispensably necessary, if it's only to teach him to walk; for no raw recruit on the first day of drilling was ever more pigeon-toed.

Col. Where is he now?

Johns. I left him, Sir, very busy over his luncheon.

Col. His luncheon!

Johns. Yes, Sir: a small morsel he takes before dinner, just to stay his stomach, consisting of about a pound of beef steaks and a tankard of porter.

Col. Send him to me. (*Exit Johnson.*)—I fear he's incorrigibly gone, beyond the power of reformation.

Enter Mandeville.

Col. Dear Mandeville, what course do you advise me to pursue with this untoward boy? With all his faults, I must consider he is my son, and pity, whilst he compels me to blush for him,

Man. Sir, we must endeavour to form him as well as we can: but I am rather inclined to think we shall never be able to give him the graces.

Col. He's not three and twenty—that's young;—we have many begin later in life to acquire the rudiments of those sciences, in which they afterwards arriv'd to the highest pitch of eminence.—Have you been able to discover how the natural bent of his temper inclines, or if he has any strong propensities?

Man. Why, Sir, from what I can collect in my short acquaintance with him, the natural bent of his temper seems inclin'd to gallantry; and if he has any strong propensity, it is to the game of skittles.

Col. No matter how low and vulgar the game be, it shews a spirit of play in him, and it must be crush'd: but if he has a turn for gallantry, it gives me the greatest hopes of his reformation. The society of an accomplish'd and beautiful woman softens and refines the roughest nature; she imparts, by a secret magic, her elegances and her graces; and to converse with her, is a kind of study that insensibly polishes her admirer.—But what reason have you to suppose he is inclin'd to gallantry?

Man. He has imparted all his amours to me ; but one in particular, which very much diverted me indeed :—After having been successful with bar maids, young milleners, and tailors daughters, out of number, Cupid shot him from a choesecake battery, and he fell in love with a pastrycook's daughter ; which, oh, terrible ! was the cause of his having an affair of honor with an attorney's clerk, in which both parties were bound over : but in painting this Helen, who bred the contention, how shall I do him justice at second hand ? Teniers lent him his pencil for her waist and Titian for her head ; for she was shap'd like a Dutch cheese, and her locks were as red as a carrot.

Col. I have sent for him ; and as I shall examine him closely, in order to search if there be any latent seeds of ability which culture may bring forth, I wish you, Mandeville, to be present, and that you will also assist me in the inquiry.

Man. Certainly ; as my cousin, I think it a duty I owe him.—Oh, here he comes with Johnson.

Enter Caleb and Johnson.

Ca. (Speaks as entering.) You don't know what taste ; my hair's the nattiest thing in town as it's dress'd now.

Col. Don't you know, Sir, I sent for you ?

Ca. Ah, father !—Cousin ! are you there too ?

Man. You don't attend.

Ca. Attend ! no : I hope I shan't attend any more.—Well, father, you sent for me : now, what do you want, my old cock ?

Col. (Turning away with disgust.) It is in vain to think of cultivating a soil like this !

Man. His manner is terrible, to be sure : but we must correct him.

Ca. Correct him ! Why, what have I done to be corrected ? I thought I was corrected enough by my last father.

Col. Won'd that correction had taught you to speak !

Ca. That it did ; and often to squeak too, till you cou'd hear me too streets off.

Col. Speak to him, Mandeville.—There is something so barbarous in every thing he says or does, that I can't bear to look at him.

Man. You'll excuse me, dear cousin, for giving you a little advice ; but as I mean it well, I'm sure you'll not be offended.

Ca. Bless your heart, you can't offend me ! I'm one of the best-temper'd boys breathing :—but what's the matter with old Firelock ? He seems in the sulks.

Man. He's not pleas'd with your manner and address ; it is too rude and abrupt : you shou'd never approach him without evident marks of respect.

Ca. Oh ! I understand you ; I shou'd always make a bow when I come into a place where he is.—Ecod, with all my heart : but what set me wrong, was hearing it said, that to have no manners at all was the best of breeding.

Mau. Ceremony is altogether is ridiculous, as rudeness is offensive ; you must avoid both.

Col. Have you ever read any thing in your life ?

Ca. Why, do you think I can't read ? Then I tell you I can ; and write and cypher too.

Man. He doesn't doubt that ; he only wishes to know what kind of reading or books you are fond of.

Ca. Then you may tell him, I am fond of histories.

Man. That's a good hearing, faith ! If he's fond of history, he must possess from nature a strong inquisitive mind under all this unpromising d'abord Men, educated in a low sphere of life, however uncouthly they express themselves, often manifest a strong intellect ; and on being but to the test, discover a fund of knowledge the better-educated man wou'd not expect from a slight acquaintance with them : I consider such minds like rich metals, as yet unpurify'd from alloy ; but let it once be known that the ore is gold, and the refiner's hand will soon bring forth the bullion.—As you are fond of history, you have no doubt dip't into the histories of Greece and Rome ?

Ca. The best of their histories.

Man. Whose were they !

Ca. Why, in the first place, I have read Don Bellianis's History of Greece, and the Seven wise Masters' History of Rome.

Col. Ask him no more questions.

Ca. Then I've read the History of Colonel Jack, and the History of the English Rogue, and the History of Moll Flanders.

Man. He appears as well read in modern as ancient history.

Col. I don't know any thing more mortifying to human pride, than to pass the better part of a man's life in toil, anxiety, and danger, accumulating wealth, to leave it to a fool at last.

Ca. You can't think, father, how sensible money makes a fool look, and how foolish a wise man looks without it.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Mr. Serge, your Honor's taylor.

Man. He's come to take measure of my cousin for his regimentals.

Ca. Regimentals ! Why, am I to be a Colonel as well as my father ?

Col. Sir, you're to be a soldier.

Ca. A soldier ! Why, what's all this ? Am I to go for a soldier, after all ?—Has Doll Blouze been with the parish officers ?

Col. I have procur'd you a commission ; no son of mine shall waste his youth in ease and indolence, dissipating that wealth I so hardly earn'd : the greater part, it is true, he shall enjoy ; but he shall first prove by his courage, and his services to his country, that he deserves it.

Ca. There's not a boy within the sound of Bow bell of a better spirit ; I'll fight any man in England of my weight and inches, with fair fistesses, for a guinea—aye, damme ! if I don't, and lay down first.

Man. Hadn't you better step to the taylor ?

Ca. Presently, presently, cousin—But now I think of it, I'll not step to him ; let the taylor step to me.—A captain step to a taylor ! Impossible ! that's bidding a fieldpiece dance the hayes after a thimble.

Col. I insist upon your going this moment.

Ca. Why, the old boy's in his tantrums.—Cousin, a

word in your ear : there's one thing before I go, I must beg of you,

Man. What's that ?

Ca. Why, as you and I will be hand and glove, as a body may say, you'll call me Caleb, and I'll call you Tom, Frank, Harry, or—what is your name ?

Man. My name is Frederick.

Ca. Frederick ! what a pretty name ! I wish my name was Frederick. Can't I be new-christen'd for one name as well as another ?

Man. (*Aside.*) Till you're new born, I fancy nothing can be done with you,

Ca. But I was going to tell you—if you call me Caleb, never do it loud, especially in company.

Man. For Heav'n's sake, why ?

Ca. Why, if you was to cry out, as thus now Caleb ? (*Bawling out.*) I should cry, “ Coming up Sir ! ” tho' you made a duke of me. [*Exit Caleb.*]

Col. Well, Mandeville, what do you think ?

Man. Hope is left us the worst of times ; however, I do not despair of making something of him yet : what I dread most, is introducing him to Charlotte.

Col. Why cannot man make over his mind, like his property, to his children ? Any distinguishing quality in all other animals survives in the same species by hereditary descent for ever ; man continues upon the earth only in his name and his revenues.—Oh, that he should leave behind him his least valuable part, and all that made him good or great should sink into the dust with him !

Enter Johnson.

Johns. Good news ! good news, Sir ! the Carnatic is arriv'd safe.—Captain Crevelt's servant is just come to acquaint you, that his master and Count Pierpoint will be here immediately.

Col. Good news, indeed, Johnson ; and heavy and afflicted as my heart is, your tidings cheer it. The Count, Mandeville, is an officer of infinite merit ; he was my prisoner during the war, and is warmly attach'd to English

manners and our glorious constitution.—But, Crevelt!—to know the merit of such a man, you must be acquainted with him.

Man. Is he an Englishman?

Col. Yes, and you may judge of his merit as a soldier, when I tell you, he has risen from the ranks, at the age of three and twenty, to the commission he now holds of captain. He's the reverse of this ill-fated boy we have been speaking to. He is self-educated; for with scarcely any advantages but those he deriv'd from a most noble and excellent nature, he is the man of sense, the scholar, and the polish'd gentleman. His father old Crevelt, was no more than a serjeant, and serv'd in Germany under Lord Granby; he brought this young man with him to India, whilst yet a boy; the first day he ever was in action, he saw his father fall; and he was found after the battle among the slain, close to his body, apparently lifeless with loss of blood, as if he had died in the pious office of defending a parent.

Enter Servant,

Serv. Captain Crevelt, Sir.

Man. Let us go and receive him; my heart burns with impatience to call such a man my friend. [*Exeunt.*]

End of the Second Act.

A C T III.

SCENE, Mandeville's House.

Enter Mandeville, Crevelt, and Colonel Talbot.

I QUITTED England, Mr. Mandeville, when a boy, and never was in London in my life before, I am charmed with the appearance of this noble city, in which the ease, convenience, and safety of its poorest inhabitant seem consulted.

Col. There is no token seen in the streets of an exhaust

ed people, drained by a tedious and expensive war, during which Great Britain fought at more unequal odds than any nation on the earth ever did before.

Crev. So much the reverse, that I am astonished at the appearance of opulence and prosperity to be met with every where; and the pleasing sensation I feel, to find my country in that state, is indescribable.

Col. Let gloomy politicians continue to predict and foresee calamities that exist only in imagination; whilst the genius of industry continues to smile upon the labours of the husbandman, the mechanic, and the manufacturer, and whilst strict probity is the character of England in her dealings with all other nations, the resources of this country will be found inexhaustible; and though its glory may be veiled by a momentary cloud, it soon recovers its former splendor.

Enter Caleb, in Regimentals.

Ca. Here I am, father, in full feather.

Col. What, Sir, is your dancing master gone already?

Ca. Bless your heart!—no master of any kind for me to-day; I never put on a new suit of clothes in my life, that I did not make holiday.

Man. (Aside to the Col.) We had better, I think, in some degree, give way to him: you cannot expect immediately to reform manners so long confirmed by habit.

Col. (Aside,) I believe you're right; so I'll try what effect indulgence may have on him.—Well, it shall be as you wou'd have it; this day shall be devoted to pleasure and amusement—Crevelt, give me leave to introduce you to my son.

Crev. I don't know any circumstance of my life affects me more than the high honor I now enjoy.

[Introducing himself.]

Ca. Why, look ye, young man, as my father desires it, I'll shake hands with you, with all my heart: but I wou'd not make so free with every old soldier's son.

Col. How dare you, Sir, insult a man of his merit with language so gross?

Ca. Why, isn't he an old soldier's son?—pretty company truly to introduce me to!

Crev. Sir, the humility of my birth I acknowledge; but must tell you, this is the first time it ever brought a blush into my cheek—I am choaked with rage—Unused to insult, cannot receive it without indignation even from the son of Colonel Talbot!

Col. I insist upon your asking that gentleman's pardon.

Ca. Why, is he a gentleman?

Col. A man of his worth, his honor, and ability, is a gentleman, though sprung in the lowest vale of society.

Ca. Nay, if you say he's a gentleman, I ask his pardon with all my heart—Nothing so common now-a-days as one gentleman's asking pardon of another; it makes up a quarrel in a trice.

Crev. Sir, I accept your apology.

Col. (*To Caleb.*) But, Sir, I will go farther with you—You must ever consider that man with respect; learn to esteem him, and it will do you more honor than your birth has done.

Enter Servant.

Serv. The gentleman from the India House, Sir, that was here before to-day, has called again.

Col. Let him know I'll wait on him immediately.

[*Exit Servant.*]

(*To Caleb.*) Young man I wish to undeceive you in one particular; seize all those opportunities of instruction I mean to give you, and redeem the time you have lost, which, if you neglect, your provision from me shall be merely independence: my name you may disgrace, but I think it a crime to bestow riches on one who would abuse them; even that youth, whose birth is so inferior in your eye I should consider as united to me by his merit in nearer ties of kindred.

[*Exit Colonel.*]

Ca. (*Strutting about.*) So then, I am to be disinherited after all and for an old soldier's son too!

Crev. What's that you say, Sir?

Ca. Say, Sir!—Damme! he looks so fierce, I don't know what to say to him—These old soldier's sons are

to used to cutting of throats, it's the devil to quarrel with them.

Man. I am ashamed of you, cousin—If you proceed in this manner, you must be lock'd up from all society:

Ca. I'll beg his pardon again: I know that's all he wants.

Crev. I'll spare you, Sir, the mortification of descending to so humiliating an act—in respect to your father, I overlook every thing you have hitherto said—I now coolly behold all that had past through a different medium; and rather feel for a youth, who, from his prospect of immense wealth, has been perhaps from his childhood surrounded with sycophants; who never let him know what it was to be acquainted with himself, and persuaded him into an opinion that wealth supplies the absence of every accomplishment and virtue.

Ca. I don't rightly understand you, Captain; but I fancy—only you mince the matter—that you meant to say I was much better fed than taught—Well, no matter—Are we good friends again?

Crev. Very good!

Ca. Then give your hand. (*Aside.*) He, he, he! I can't help laughing, after all, to think of such a fellow's being a gentleman!—But I say, Captain; they tell me you are a devil of a fellow for fighting: now, do you see me, as I am an officer as well as yourself, I'd be glad to know how you generally found yourself before you went into the field of battle.

Crev. Much as I do at present.

Ca. What, no more frighten'd!

Crev. No, Sir.

Ca. Come, come, no tricks upon travellers, Captain; do you think I'm such a fool as to believe you?

Crev. Sir!

Ca. (*Terrify'd.*) Sir!—He looks at me like a tiger—I'll ask him no more questions—he has half frighten'd me out of my commission already—Eh! (*Looking out.*)—Ecod, yonder I see my father talking to two fine girls—I'll go have a peep at them—Cousin Mandeville, good bye—Captain, your servant—(*Stifling a laugh.*) A gentleman truly!—

What a fine thing it is to be born one—it saves a world of trouble in learning. [Exit Caleb.]

Man. The story of this unhappy young man, and how his education came to be so much neglected, is too long to acquaint you of particular, at present; but you see what he is, and, I hope, estimate an insult from him accordingly.

Grev. I think no more of it—but my heart bleeds for his father.

Man. You talk of leaving town to day—why, dear Sir, will you so suddenly quit friends, who, of all things, covet your society? Is the business which calls you from us, of that urgent nature, you cannot postpone it for a few days at least?

Grev. It is what I ought not to do—for my relations in England, (if I have any living) have never heard from me since I quitted the country; but perhaps it's better to prepare them for the meeting; so I shall write to them by this night's post, and continue your guest a little longer.

Man. Now this is truly friendly—I wou'dn't for the world have you leave the town till after my Cousin Talbot's wedding.

Grev. Then he's going to be married?

Man. So his father intends, as the only means of reforming him, the lady is one of those two, who came here within this half hour; and whom we left with Count Pierpoint, admiring his magnificent presents from the different princes of the East, at whose courts he has been occasionally envoy.

Grev. But which of the ladies is intended for Mr. Talbot?

Man. Charlotte—she whom you so much admired; and, short as the Count's acquaintance with them is, he appears already smitten with her Cousin Harriet—Unluckily for him she happens to be engaged.

Grev. But, Charlotte! It is she, then; who is intended for Mr. Talbot?—I think I never saw a finer girl.

Man. She's a divine creature! and though her Adonis is so near a relation, I confess I wish her a better husband;—but I don't know how matters may terminate—She's a girl of great spirit—has a very fine independency; and such is

her disposition, that I'm confident there is no temptation in wealth could induce her to marry any man whom she did not like.

Enter Harriet.

Har. Ha, ha, ha ! I beg your pardon, Mr. Mandeville, for laughing so much at the expence of your Cousin Talbot ; but his manner, person and conversation, are all so truly original, that gravity itself must be provok'd to laughter in his company.

Man. It's very true, Harriet ; he is a most extraordinary being, I must confess.

Har. He introduc'd himself to Charlotte this moment ; and such a figure does he cut ! He can neither walk, sit nor stand still, with gazing at his person—Charlotte and he are together ; she seems delighted with him.

Crev. Then Ma'am, she likes him ?

Har. She likes to laugh at him, Sir—Do, Mandeville, come, and take a look at him.

Man. Will you go, Captain Crevelt ?

Crev. I'll just speak to Johnson, Sir, and follow you.
(*Exeunt Man. and Har.*)—I never saw that woman in my life before, who in a moment has had such a power over me—She will not marry him, they say,—but what then ? Does it follow, of course, that she must like me ?

Enter Johnson.

Johns. I understand your Honor wish'd to see me.

Crev. Yes, Johnson ; as you came to London before me, I wish'd to ask you, if you knew any thing of the family of this young lady your master intends his son shall marry ?

Johns. Why, Sir, I understand she is the daughter of a Sir Oliver Oldstock ; an old acquaintance of the Colonel's—her father, I hear, meant she shou'd marry Mr. Mandeville, supposing he wou'd be my master's heir ; but when a son made his appearance, like all other worldly men,

Sir Oliver chang'd his note ; and the poor young lady is to become a sacrifice to this—I wish he wasn't my master's son.

Crev. But she won't, Johnson, be made a sacrifice.

Johns. I hope not, Sir ;—but, lord ! what won't money do ? Don't we see money every day couple age and deformity to youth and beauty ; a young creature, like an angel, link'd to an old skeleton of dry-bones—as if the dæmon of avarice and sin had acquir'd such ascendancy in the world, as to bring about an union betwixt death and immortality ?

Crev. Why, Johnson, you speak with great feeling and spirit on the subject.

Johns. Ah, Captain Crevel ! what a charming couple you two wou'd make—I, who have seen your Honor in the field, wou'd expect a Granby or a Marlborough from such a marriage.

Crev. (*Musing.*) I promised to follow them ; but the less I see her, the better for my peace ; it's only feeding a passion I shou'd banish from my heart for ever.—Johnson, take no notice that I have ask'd you any questions concerning Miss Oldstock : shou'd I be inquir'd for, I am gone to the library.—Books, or my own thoughts, are the only society I am fit for.

[*Exit Crev.*]

Johns. Well, as long as I live, I never will think there is any thing in great blood again. Here is a son of one of the best families in the kingdom, with neither person nor mind superior to one of his father's domestics—and if we turn our eyes to the other side, we behold the offspring of an old soldier, with the soul of a prince, and the head of a prime minister.

Enter Nancy, running.

Nan. Mr. Johnson, Mr. Johnson, here's a letter for you, brought by the penny post ; (*Gives it.*) and short a time as you have been in London I'm sure it's a love letter.

Johns. Aye ; pray, Nancy, how have you made that discovery ? Is it by the elegant penmanship of its pothook-and

hanger superſcription, or by the God of Love's own broad ſeal ſtampt upon it by a waſer and thimble ?

Nan. Ecod, Mr. Johnson, you're a knowing hand ; I'll engage you have hook'd in many a poor girl in your time.

Johnſ. But I haven't paid the poſtage.

Nan. That's always paid beforehand into the office with the letter.

Johnſ. But you know, Nancy, letters are convey'd now upon a new eſta bliſhment, and for fear of miſtakes, I'll ev'n pay double poſtage. [*Kiſſes her.*

Nan. It's mighty well ! I ſuppoſe when you find this is a miſtake, you'll be for having the overcharge back again.

[*Exit Nancy.*

Johnſ. Now for my letter.—'Sdeath ! it's from my ſweet little Mrs. Wilkins ! (*Reads.*) “ Mrs. Wilkins's compliments to Mr. Johnson ; will be glad of his company this evening to tea, as ſhe wiſhes to treat with him about thoſe little matters he brought with him from India : if the two ſets of China be as handſome as he ſaid they were, ſhe will take them both off his hands ; ſhe'll take, beſides, ſome chintz and muſſins for gowns, and half a dozen ſhawls ; he need not ſend her any mandarins ; ſhe has more old figures than is worth houſe room.

“ P. S. Mr. Wilkins is very ſorry he can't be at home the whole evening, very particular buſineſs calling him to Hogſden.”

I was afraid I ſhou'd have had no poſtſcript ; but all's right, I find.—Yes, my ſweet Mrs. Wilkins, I will go and talk to you about thoſe trifles I brought with me from India : but you ſhall have no mandarins—indeed, I thought you had one too many of theſe old figures. [*Exit.*

Enter Caleb, followed by Charlotte.

Ca. Well, Miſs ; how do you like me ? Don't you think I look like a captain ?

Char. Like a Captain ! It wou'd be doing you juſtice to compare you to any one officer under His Maſteſty : I am really at a loſs for a compariſon to match you with—

Come, turn about, and let me see your shapes—Mercy! what a long sword they have tied you to!

Ca. That was all my own thought: I haven't learnt to fence yet; and as I am told a gentleman is nobody till he has fought about a score duels, I was determined the first time I fought not to be overreach'd by any body.

Char. A very prudent resolution I must confess! valour is by no means incompatible with discretion: but pray, Sir, are you so very quarrelsome, that you expect to have all those duels upon your hands?

Ca. Me quarrelsome!—Bless your heart, I'm as quiet as a lamb.

Char. Then why do you expect to fight so much?

Ca. Because it's the fashion; and you know a man had better be out of the world than out of the fashion.

Char. Then I think you are taking an excellent method to have your choice.

Ca. Yes; fighting's quite a gentleman-like amusement;—besides, it will be put in the news-papers; and I shall read my own name in print, along with the debates of Lords and Commons; and that's the cause, I suppose, of all duels.

Char. I believe duels have been fought more than once—and, oh, fatal delusion! perhaps a valuable life lost for a cause altogether as frivolous!

Ca. But now I am dress'd, do you see me, I wish to shew myself to some of my old acquaintances; therefore suppose you and I go this evening to Bagnigge Wells, and drink tea—the hot rolls are so nice there, you can't think—

Char. Some other time; I can't possibly go this evening.

Ca. Mayhap you think I won't pay for the tea, but I will; and moreover than that, I'll treat you to the hall-play afterwards.

Char. You must, indeed, excuse me, Sir—*(Aside.)*—with I cou'd get rid of him.—This moment poor Creer pass'd me with a dejected air—I follow'd him with a stolen glance, till I trac'd him into the library.—I wish I knew what was the matter with him; I never saw a man in my life I pity so much.

Ca. (Looking at himself.) How they stare at our hop, to see me in this dress!

Char. This fellow takes no notice of me; his regimentals have actually rivall'd me!

C. (With great delight.) Dress I see is every thing; such a suit of regimentals wou'd make any man a great officer—How this world goes! fine fellows are made by taylorors, and taylorors undone by fine fellows!

Char. My Narcissus is so engag'd with his person, it wou'd be foolish to lose this opportunity of getting rid of him: I'll drop carelessly into the library—I never saw so sudden an alteration in a man's looks as in poor Crevelt's. I hope he's not in love—Poor Charlotte, if the object be not in England!

[*Exit Char.*]

Ca. (To himself.) To be sure, Caleb, you haven't a pair of legs?—It is not every captain who can beat a march with such a pair of drumsticks—I wonder how my legs would look in a pair of new boots—I never rode of a Sunday, but in a pair of my father's old ones—Most smart captains, I observe, foot as well as horse, mount the streets in boots.—So, you won't go to Bagnigge Wells? (*Looking up.*) Eh! why she's gone!—Ecod I'm glad of it!—and now the coast is clear, I'll have a ramble,—What signifies my being dress'd, if nobody sees me?—I'll call over to Jacob Wilkins's, and take a glass with him—Who knows, but one of these days, when I return from abroad a great warrior, but old Jacob may take down his sign, and hang me up over his door.

Enter Lady O'dstock and Count Pierppint.

La. O. Really, my Lord, I tremble for the consequences of this interview; if Sir Oliver shou'd meet us, and happen to be in one of his jealous moods, it is in vain to tell him of the innocency of our conversation; he will interpret my very looks, and draw the strangest inferences from even the tone of voice with which I utter the most good-natur'd sentence.

Count. Il est bien extraordinaire; it appears to me very strange, Madam, dat people of fashion en Angleterre can

be so bourgeois. Mon Dieu ! en France, quand un homme est marié, ven ve marry, by Gar, our friends cannot nous oblige more dan by take care of our wives.

La. O, Oh, my Lord ! you're a refin'd people ; we are, at least, half a century behind you in point of civilization.

Count. But on my vord, you improve every day ; people de fashion in both countries, vil be ver soon les memes ; a voila le difference—at present, see the difference between France and England—Un Anglois est trop brusque, too rough ; un Francois, peutetre trop poli ; but dat be fault sur cote-droit, on de right side—suppose nous avons—suppose ve have von traite de commerce, pour un exchange des maniers ; Jack Bull is von guinea too heavy ; & un Frenchman, entre nous, peutetre un louis d'or too light ;—now to make a de balance even, scrape de Englis, or vat you call sweat a de English guinea, and augmentez le Louis d'Or, and you give de polish to de one, and de proper weight to the other.

La. O. I blush, my Lord, to think my education was so cruelly neglected, that I cannot hold a conversation with you in your own language.—People of condition shou'd always speak French.

Count. Mais j'espere—me hope you understand ?

La. O. Oh, perfectly, my Lord ; you speak the language of the Graces ; and that, our sex understand in every country.

Count. Si j'entends ; vous, ma belle ange ! If I understand, it is you have give me the instructions.

La. O. How well he makes himself understood ! I never heard such sweet broken English in my life before.

Count. Mais, Madam ! may I beg leave to solicit—

[Taking her by the hand.

La. O. My Lord ! Dear Count !

[Seemingly confused

Count. Madam, may I solicit votre pitis, pour un passion qui brule mon ame—my passion burn a my heart.

La. O. Oh heavens ! what a discovery is here ? How fatal to the happiness of I hope my Lord, you will ex-

ert your philosophy on this occasion, and consider the insurmountable obstacle.

Count. Obstacle, Madam ! quelle obstacle to a man of my rank and fortune ?

La. O. Oh, fie, fie, my Lord ! can a man of your delicacy talk in this strain ?

Count. Ah, si vous pouviez lire—if you cou'd read a my heart—

La. O. Go, unhappy youth ! and endeavour to extinguish a fruitless flame, that, if it continue to burn, must only prove a source of disquietude to us both : go, too-pleasing seducer ! and like the faithful, but honourable Werter, leave your ill-star'd, sympathizing Charlotte to her tears !

[*Affecting to weep.*]

Count. My Charlotte ! No, it is my Harriet.

La. O. Harriet !—What Harriet ?

Count. Your niece, Madam ; that petite ange—

La. O. My niece ! Was my niece the object of all this adoration ?

Count. Is there one else living deserve so much ?

La. O. Yes, a hundred, if you had eyes to see.

Count. Eh bien ! Madam, what you say to my proposal ?

La. O. My niece is engag'd ; or, if she wasn't, you shou'd not have her.

Count. Mais, le Chevalier Oldstock dit le contraire.—Sir Oliver say quite different.

La. O. Sir Oliver's an old fool, and I suppose didn't understand you, for you speak terrible English. [*Exit.*]

Count. I speak terrible Englis !—Mon Dieu !—il est bien strange !—just now I speak ver sweet broke Englis.

Enter Sir Oliver.

Sir. O. Well, Count, what says my wife ?

Count. She does refuse—she vil not consent.

Sir. O. I'm glad of it.

Count. Diable ! pourquoi you glad of it ?

Sir O. Because now I shall have an opportunity of shewing my authority, and letting her know, you shall have my piece in spite of her.—She's my own brother's daughter ;

he left her an orphan in my care, and I'll dispose of her as I like; I ask'd Lady Oldstock's approbation, only for the pleasure of being refus'd it—I love contradiction

Count. Mon cher Chevalie! you transport me.

Sir O. Yes, Count; contradiction's my hobby horse; I mount him every hour of the day; and the more he kicks and flings, the greater delight I take in riding him;—I know you think me a whimsical old fellow; but you are new to our clime and our manners—we delight in thinking for ourselves—opposition is the very soul of an Englishman—he, likes it in himself, and in others also; peace and prosperity with good eating and drinking, would throw him into a lethargy, if imagination didn't supply that spur to goad him on constantly to action.

Count. Now, mon chere Pere, me ville settle—

Sir O. Odso! that's right—mind, the foundation stone of our agreement is, that you settle in England—a niece of mine shall never breed subjects to fight against her king and country!

Count. Monsieur, you have my word of honour; and now I will go visit my pretty Miss, vat you call Harriet: mais, Monsieur! rest assure me vil die, and live in England.

[Exit Count.]

Sir O. Well said, Monsieur! cart before the horse.—But now I am alone, let me see how my accounts stand: I have secured the French nabob for my niece; now it would be a master stroke if I cou'd obtain the English one for my daughter, and thus center the two nabobs in my own family: This son of the Colonel's is a downright savage: Charlotte never cou'd like him; or if she cou'd interest tells me I shou'd not; therefore her liking's out of the question: there's to be a division of the Colonel's property, between the son and Mandeville: I want the whole, if possible. The Colonel's not fifty, and in my mind he's a better looking man than either his son or his nephew. Charlotte's having ten thousand pounds independent of me, makes her very obstinate; debates will run high, I fear; as, indeed, they very often do in my family, where, tho' I'm constantly left in a minority, I never lose a question—its true. I have open mouths upon me from all sides, till, like

greater men, I'm fairly badger'd : but it's only waiting till the strangers are all out, and I tell the house as I please afterwards.—Zounds ! here comes Mandeville : I wish I cou'd get decently out of his way.

Enter Mandeville.

Man. I have been in search of you, Sir Oliver.

Sir O. I wish I had known that ; I'd have sav'd you a good deal of trouble.—Well, my good Sir, had you any thing particular to say to me ?

Man. Is your conduct towards me consistent with honour ?

Sir O. I don't understand you,

Man. How convenient it is to assume ignorance of a subject on which it is painful to hear the truth, even to the man incapable of respecting it ! Honour, tho' shut out from the heart, will still knock at its gates, and tell the guilty, there is a register kept in the avenging court of remorse for every act of injustice.

Sir O. Upon my word, Mr. Mandeville, you speak to me in a very strange stile ; this is not a manner in which I am accusom'd to be address'd. You bounce in all of a sudden, transported with rage, for what cause is best known to yourself, and with a knock-me-down countenance, treat me as if my age and my rank had no kind of respect due to them.

Man. Sir, no man honours age more than I ; or more readily yields rank every respect it can claim, when that rank does not forfeit its title to esteem, by meanly sinking and degrading itself :—but, when men in superior stations behave as if their actions were above all censure and control, they must be told that they are deceiving themselves, as well as the world, and that no man is suffer'd to injure another with impunity.

Sir O. Well, Sir, in what particular have I injur'd you, to provoke the thunder of this terrible Phillipic ?

Man. Can you seriously ask me that question, when you sanction the addresses of Count Pierpoint to your niece ?

Sir O. Well, and what then ?

Man. Have you forgot your prior engagement to me?

Sir O. Mr. Mandeville, the poet says, that "Every day's a satire on the last; as circumstances vary, or events fall out, we are compelled by necessity to change our minds. As to my niece, whom I consider in the light of a daughter, I think it my duty, in providing her with a husband, to make the best bargain I can for her.

Man. Sir, have you no regard to what the world will say on this occasion? The world, Sir; that harsh, blind, misjudging multitude; whose slander, if it soil the ermine purity of virtue, what will it say, when it has justice upon its side?

Sir O. Nothing that I value—Young man, when you have lived as many years with the world as I have, you'll learn to make your happiness independent of its opinion—Don't you see knaves and fools every day rise into consequence, and all from the opinion of the world—the opinion of the world, Sir! It's a mouthful of moonshine!

Man. I believe with you that the world is too indolent—too much occupied with its pleasures, or its miseries, to take up the business of a censor—I fear it never examines thoroughly, any man's pretensions to its favour: the more he asks, the more he generally obtains from the world; hence, folly, confidence and vice, revel in the arms of luxury, whilst merit, proud, and retiring from the conscious dignity of genius and virtue, is suffer'd to perish for want of bread!—But, Sir——

Sir O. But me no more this debate, Mr. Mandeville—the question is put, and I am going.—Partial as I am to a polemical mode of discourse, I find that there may be sometimes even too much contradiction.

Man. What shall I do with this deceitful, unfeeling man? But can I hesitate whilst I have a particle of spirit left? I'll go this moment, state the matter to Count Pierpoint, and he shall resign, or fight for his mistress!

Enter Harriet.

Har. Dear Mandeville, what is the matter?—My uncle

has just parted from you seemingly much out of temper, and the wildness and disorder of your looks, terrify me?

Man. My heart is torn to pieces, Harriet—Indignation at the ungenerous treatment I have met with from your uncle, added to my fears of losing you, distract me.

Har. But can you doubt your Harriet? There is no power upon earth shall force me to be another's; do then, dear Mandeville! strive to calm this tumult in your mind—Betrayed by the violence of your passion, you talk'd of going in search of Count Pierpoint—let me beseech you not.

Man. You were deceived, Harriet, in what you heard me say—do not prevent my going—I have business of a most particular nature calls me.

Har. I know perfectly the business that calls you—but let me conjure you, by all that regard you ever profess'd for me, not to think of it—You say your fears of losing me, distract you—judge then of the state of my heart, by your own—Has Harriet no fears for her Mandeville, at a moment she sees him eat up with an ungovernable rage—about, perhaps, to hurry himself, or a fellow creature into eternity?

Man. Your apprehensions, Harriet, are groundless—from what I learn of the Count's character, I believe him to be a man of too nice honour; too equitable, too generous, to reduce me to the necessity of proceeding to extremities; I only wish to explain matters to him.

Har. I can recommend a much better course to you, and one much more likely to succeed—Go to your uncle, that good that noble-hearted man—tell him your story—if any body has weight with Sir Oliver, it is Colonel Talbot.

Man. Nobody has weight with him, when avarice claims his ear.

Har. You are mistaken; he is not so great a slave to avarice as you suppose him.

Man. He is your uncle, Harriet and I cannot speak of him with harshness.

Har. I know by your eyes, you are not so angry as you were.

Man. I will be guided by you in every thing—There is

a fascinating power, Harriet, in your looks and accents, when you would persuade, that cannot be resisted ; a melting softness clings about my heart as I listen and behold you ; there is sure a divinity in angel-beauty ! You caused the tempest in my soul, and have calm'd it. *[Exeunt.]*

End of the Third Act.

ACT IV.

SCENE, *An Apartment at Mandeville's.*

Caleb and Johnson discovered over a Bottle.

Caleb.

COME, my boy since you won't go to Jacob Wilkins's with me, we'll tope a little here—Fill your glass higher—higher yet ; I'll have no sky lights—This is a bumper toast.

Johns. Well what is it ?

Ca. Our noble selves. *[Drinks.]*

Johns. I find that you think a sentiment, like charity, should begin at home.

Ca. I do to be sure.

Johns. We should have begun with the king and constitution.

Ca. Then here it goes—and, though it's the second toast now, it shall be the first next bottle.

Johns. Next bottle ! But, Mr. Talbot, I have a particular engagement upon my hands this evening—I hope you'll excuse my leaving you.

Ca. You shan't stir a foot *(Pushes him to his chair.)* Your wine's so good—I wonder how any body can quit such liquor.

Johns. But suppose there's a lady in the case—you won't press me to stay surely, after I tell you that ?

Ca. Damn it ! Take me with you !

Johns. Impossible !

Ca. Then sit down and drink with me, for I won't part with you.

Johns. What the devil shall I do (*Looking on his watch*) It wants but a quarter to six, and Mrs. Wilkins will be waiting tea for me. (*Aside.*

Ca. Come, to the charge again, and a brimmer it shall be.

Johns. (*Aside.*) I shall get fuddled too; I have often in a frolic assumed drunkenness; suppose I practise that stratagem now to get away from him? (*Hiccups, &c.*

Ca. Why, now I look at you, I think you are getting a little forward.

Johns. But I am not quite so bad as you think; do let me go, Mr. Talbot.

Ca. Do you think I have no more regard for you? I tell you, you must go to bed—now do go to bed.

Johns. How the devil shall I get away from him? Zounds, Sir I am not drunk. [*appearing to be sober.*

Ca. Poor fellow! I am sorry to see you so far gone; but I'll take care of you for this night. No, no; no going out this night. [*Impeding him.*

Johns. S'death and fire! Will this convince you that I am sober. [*Walking firmly up the stage.*

Ca. Take another turn and I'll tell you.

Johns. But will you let me go then?

Ca. After we have had another bottle.

Johns. Zounds! another bottle!—Well, I'll go down to the cellar for it. [*Crosses.*

Ca. Mind you don't stay.

Johns. No, no; I shan't stay—(*Aside.*) long in this house, now I have got out of your clutches, young gentleman. [*Exit.*

Ca. This is a devilish honest bottle—there is half a pint in it yet—Well, my friend is gone, so here goes his health (*Drinks.*) Poor fellow!—I never saw a man so soon drunk and sober—Damn it, how he stays!—I long for a glass of wine; tho' he's not here, eod, I'll fill my glass—a good bottle of wine is excellent company. [*Drinks.*

Enter Mandeville.

Man. What, Sir, drinking by yourself?

Ca. I'm sure that's not my fault—I shall be very glad if you'll sit down and keep me company: I expect Johnson every minute with the other bottle.

Man. I suppose, Sir, Johnson has been your companion?

Ca. Yes; and a choice companion he is; only apt to get muzz'd too soon.—Come, come, let me fill you a glass.

Man. I'll drink none, Sir; nor shall you drink any more; your father desires to see you instantly.

Ca. You'll let me finish the bottle?

Man. You must drink no more! He puts me beyond all patience

[*Aside.*

Ca. Good, then I'll take it with me. [*Takes it up.*

Man. Set it down, Sir, [*Lays hold on him violently.*
Caleb in a fright, drops and breaks the Bottle.

Ca. There, (*Looking at it,*) I have set it down, and am ready to go with you; we must be good friends again now we have crack'd a bottle together. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, *A Library.*

Crevelt, seated, with a Book

Crevelt. (*Throws the Book down.*)

It is to no purpose—I cannot read—This adorable girl has taken such entire possession of my mind, it has'nt room for any other object; when Mr. Mandeville told me she was going to be married, and to whom, my heart died within me, for then I knew all hope was lost; but grant there was no dishonour, no ingratitude in harbouring a passion for a woman intended for the son of my benefactor; how should a low-born, abject thing, like me, aspire to one so much above him? Wou'd not my birth be an insurmountable bar to my hopes? She comes this way—I would avoid her, but have not the power.

Enter Charlotte (with a Volume of Shakespeare in her hand.

Char. (*Reading,*

— “ She never told her love;

“ But let concealment, like a worm i'th'bud,

“ Feed on her damask cheek: she pin'd in thought,

" And with a green and yellow melancholy,

" She sat like Patience on a monument,

" Smiling at Grief"—

Bless me ! Captain Crevelt (*starting.*) I did'nt see you—I was quite absorbed in poor Viola's melancholy relation of undivulged love ; this little picture is so highly finished, so delicately coloured with touches of the true pathetic, that I never read it without being wonderfully affected—Don't you think it one of the finest passages in all Shakespeare ?

Creu. I so much admire it, Madam, that I would give the world this moment for the pencil of its immortal writer, to paint one of our sex in the same state of uncomplaining despondency.

Char. I protest you spoke those last words with so serious an air, that I'm half inclined to think you're in love yourself : if that be the case, come, make me your confidante ; I'll be as secret and as silent as Shakespeare's own marble Grief and Patience : I have the music of the Avon swan this moment at my heart, and cou'd hear a lover whisper his tale under a tree in which the nightingale sung, and the moon tipt its boughs with silver.

Creu. You speak, Madam, like one well vers'd in the passion.

Char. And is that strange, Sir, when I come with Shakespeare in my hand ; a master who teaches the whole history of the passions ? His keen and ardent eye in a fine frenzy rolling, pierced into the secret chambers of the heart where the passions slumber ; and woke them, as he swept where he divine to all their changeful moods of pain and joy, till kindled up to madness, or to ecstasy ; but, when he touches upon love, though the flash be momentary, it resembles lightning, suddenly rising the surface of the earth, and disclosing the radiant portal of a diamond quarry.

Creu. Were I to wish to another laurel on the grave of Shakespeare, it should be planted by the hand of so charming a commentator.

Char. Sir, there is a laurel already planted on his grave by one of our sex, which will flourish till the spirit of his of his genius, and his writings are no more remembered.—

but to the point—I have pronounc'd you in love ; now let me know who your mistress is ?

Grev. Madam, I dare not.

Char. Dare not ! Is that a soldier's phrase ? Courage, man ; there is nothing impossible to spirit and perseverance ; besides, the more difficulties lay in the road to your mistress, the better she'll like you for surmounting them.

Grev. But suppose there was a difficulty not to be surmounted !

Char. If your mistress does not dislike you, I know of no other difficulty which is not to be surmounted.

Grev. But even presuming that were the case, which I have by no means reason to imagine, I cannot think of her without condemning myself.

Char. Is she so much beneath you ?

Grev. She's above my praise, and above my hopes.

Char. If she deserves all this adoration, she never will think herself above a man of merit.

Grev. Then, Madam, you don't think marrying for love entirely out of fashion ?

Char. I never would marry for any thing else.

Grev. (*Aside*) Then I'm undone ; she loves the man for whom she is intended ; and the assurance of that I have now received from her own lips, was meant as a reproach to a passion she has discovered, in spite of all my efforts to conceal it.

Char. (*Seeing his disorder*) What's the matter, Sir ?

Grev. I fear, Madam, I only interrupt your studies.

[*Going.*]

Char. How can you talk so ! I don't know any one whose conversation, on so short an acquaintance, is so agreeable to me ; this last has been particularly interesting.

Grev. It is plain from the sarcasm of that reply, that she understands me—but I am justly punished for my apostacy to honour, in daring to think of her.

[*Aside.*]

Char. He appears confused and embarrassed all of a sudden ; I fear my vanity has betrayed me too far, and that I have been mistaken in the object of his affections.

[*Aside.*]

Grev. I have not power to speak to her.

[*Aside.*]

Char. No, no ; I'm not the object.

[*Aside.*]

HE WOULD BE A SOLDIER.

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Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, the Colonel wishes to see you immediately.

Crev. What a release from torture ! (*Aside.*) I shall wait on him. (*Exit Servant.*) Madam your most obedient. [*Exit.*

Manet Charlotte.

Char. So I have as good as told a man I like him, who it is plain, is in love with another woman : unhappy Charlotte !

Enter Sir Oliver (Speaks as he comes on.)

Sir O. Charlotte !

Char. Sir.

Sir O. Sir ! How melancholy a monosyllable comes from a woman's mouth ; it sounds as dismal as a single bell after a full peal. But, Charlotte, what's the matter ? I never saw you so thoughtful before : I hope it is not your intended marriage that makes you uneasy.

Char. It never gave me an uneasy moment. I had made up my mind on the subject.

Sir O. Well, well ; let the matter rest then : however I must confess I should like to see my girl well married and settled before I left the world.

Char. I don't think I shall ever marry.

Sir O. Never marry !

Char. No.

Sir O. Confound those monosyllables ! Charlotte, let me have no more of them ; the laconic style does not become you : I wonder from whom you take it ; for my part I'm fond of the figure of amplification in discourse ; and I'm sure your mother deals in an eloquence, copious at times, even to redundancy.

Char. Sir, I have not spirits for conversation.

Sir O. I am surpris'd at that, when you have every thing your own way: you won't marry this body, nor you won't marry t'other; and I, like an easy, indulgent old soul, humour you in every thing, fond as I am of contradiction.

Char. Hav'nt you all's one as held me up to sale to the highest bidder?—I was first intended for Mr. Mandeville, next destined to Colonel Talbot's new-found heir.

Sir O. His new-found bear you shou'd say; but Charlotte, Charlotte, how uncandid you are! when I propos'd the last match I had not seen the man.

Char. Sir, you change your mind so often, and band me about in so extraordinary a manner, that I shall become a topic for public ridicule.

Sir O. Well, and if I do change my mind often, isn't it for your good? As one project starts up in my mind better than another, in order to take advantage of that, I must naturally contradict myself. The Spanish proverb says, a wise man often changes his mind, a fool never.

Char. According to that proverb you should be a second Solomon: who you intend for me next I cannot possibly guess; but as I never will marry without your consent, I trust it will not be deemed undutiful, if I always retain a negative to myself, in a matter which so nearly concerns my happiness as the choice of a husband. [Exit.]

Sir O. I fear, like all great projectors and politicians, I refine too much; I spin the wires that compose my nets so fine, that though they answer the purpose of deceiving the eye, when their strength is tried, a touch breaks them.—What's to be done? she actually sets my authority at defiance; but this comes of rich uncles leaving fat legacies to their nieces; it converts a father into a cypher.

Enter Lady Oldstock and Harriet.

Lady O. Sir Oliver, Sir Oliver, the whole world is condemning you.

Sir O. So much the better; a quarter of the world never was right, but the whole is always wrong; you have

brought me this good news, I suppose, knowing I was out of spirits.

Har. To contract for me, without my knowledge, and with an utter stranger too ! as if I had not the common privilege of a thinking rational creature ?

Sir O. Ecod, I think you have too much of that privilege : why, you ungrateful minx, do you fly in my face for endeavouring to get a count for you.

Lady O. A count ! A strange kind of count—the fellow made love to me.

Sir O. Then indeed must he be a strange kind of count.

Lady O. I shall sue for a separate maintenance.

Har. And I shall sue for the little property my father left in his hands.

Sir O. Damn it, since you have begun, come, fire away from both sides, volley after volley ; don't spare me, I'll make you raise the siege at last ; contradiction's my element, as fire is the Salamander's. I cau't have too much of it ; my opinion is impregnable.

Har. It's in vain to speak to him.

Lady O. Speak to him, child ! now he's in all his glory.

Sir O. Hobbs maintains that the whole world is in a state of warfare, and I believe him. [*Speaking to himself.*]

Lady O. I say, Sir Oliver, are you deaf ?

Sir O. But it is a wise law in nature.

Har. Dear uncle, will you listen to me ?

Sir O. Opposition calls forth the latent powers of the mind.

La O. Was there ever any thing so provoking !

Sir O. Your greatest men have been form'd by difficulties.

Har. Every moment is big with danger to my happiness.

Sir O. Methinks I now resemble the memorable column of English infantry at Fontenoy, marching down between two forts, with all their batteries playing upon it : whiz, fly the small shot from the left ; and bang go the great guns from the right ; but on we march, firm as a wedge ; without confusion, without disorder, without dismay ; and quit the field of battle with honour.

[*Exti-*

Har. My principal fear, is a quarrel between Count Pierpoint and Mr. Mandeville.

La O. You had better speak to his friend, Captain Crevelt; for my part, I have no influence with the Count.

Har. Dear aunt, how can you talk thus; So fine a woman will never lose her influence.

La O. Pray, Harriet, have you ever read that elegant fellow St. Evremond's account of the lovely Ninon; She who retain'd her beauty and power of fascination to the age of eighty?

Har. I have never read S. Evremond, Madam.

La O. Then you have read nothing: he was the intimate friend of Fontaine, Racine, and Corneille; all the great men of his time valued his friendship: but what most endears him to me, was his esteem for the lovely Ninon—I shall never forget one of her letters, in which she mentions her first wearing spectacles; but, said that charming woman, as I had always a grave look, spectacles become me.

Har. I declare, aunt, I have always thought the same of you, when I have seen you with your spectacles on.

La O. But you're mistaken, Harriet, if you suppose I wear spectacles from any necessity I have for them—I wear them by way of prevention.

Har. As I hope to live, here comes the Count; he'll tease me to death if I stay—I never saw you look so well, aunt.

La O. You may go, Harriet, and find Captain Crevelt—I'll once more try my influence with this Frenchman.

[Exit Harriet.]

Enter Count Pierpoint.

La O. Well, Count; I hope you have chang'd your opinion since our last conversation, and that you're become a little more Anglicised.

Count. En bien! Madam, je ne puis pas comprendre, I no understand.

La O. Why, we have chang'd characters; you can't understand me now, and I couldn't understand you before: but, Count, I'd advise you to consider you are in England; and tho' it may be the etiquette in France to treat a married la-

dy with as much attention as a single, it is in this country of jealous circumspection, very dangerous : it is almost sufficient to cause a separation.

Count. Ah, Madam ! have a some pity on those whom your charms enslave, quand l'amour est dans le cœur ? il ait l'esprit comme lui meme ; dat is, ven love is in de heart, he make a dey understand blind as himself, by Gar.

La O. The French are certainly the most agreeable people in the world ; if they transgress, they make reparation with so good a grace, that it's delightful to be on good or bad terms with them.

Count. I made von grand faux pas ; but like good general, me vil profit by my loss. (*Aside.*)—Madam Oldstock is vat you call von grand bastion, or outwork : I will take a that first, & la petite citadel, Mademoiselle Harriet, follow of course, by Gar.

La O. Well Count, I forgive you ; but it's on condition that you are more circumspect in future.

Enter Sir Oliver at the Back of the Stage.

Sir O. If I cou'd lay my hand on Burn's Justice in the library, that wou'd set me right : but I think it's a question for gentlemen of the common law.—Eh ! what's all this.

[*Seeing the Count and Lady O.*

Count. Madam, permertez moi baiser votre main ; I must kifs a your von pretty hand in sing of reconciliation.

[*Kissing her hand.*

Sir O. I was thinking of the common law ; but here promises to arise a question for gentlemen of the civil law.

La O. Jealousy, Count, is a tree of English growth.

Sir O. It may be a tree of English growth ; but it's a tree would never flourish, if a taste for French gardening did not so often make the branches sprout.

Count. Mon Dieu ! quelle grand disproportion in your age and the Chevalier Oldstock !

La O. When a woman marries very young, my Lord, a dozen years difference is nothing in the age of a husband.

Sir O. A dozen years ! Damme, If there's a dozen months between us.

La O. That's a most beautiful brilliant, Count, on your

finger—I think I never saw so large a one : the rich cluster of its rays cast a light actually celestial.

Sir O. If that poor diamond cou'd speak now, perhaps we'd find it was not very celestially come by.

Count. To reconcile me complete, permettez moi to make you von present.

La O. Dear Count, I cannot think of accepting a ring of such immense value—No, no, Count, I am not such an infant as to wish to possess every thing that I admire.

Sir O. No, to be sure, you an't.—Why, Count, how is all this? [Coming forward.]

La O. Oh ! heaven's ! Sir Oliver ?

Sir O. Yes, my Lady ; does the great disproportion of our years frighten you ?

Count. Upon my word, Monsieur Oldstock, this is not behave with your usual politesse.

Sir O. Why, what the devil, man ! aren't you content with one of my chickens, but you must have my old hen to the bargain ?

La O. Old hen !

Sir O. Yes, my Lady ; when I had you first you were no pullet,

La O. Now there will be no end to his suspicions.

Sir O. Ecod, I think this is putting suspicion out of the question.—Well, my Lady, what have you to say for yourself ? You ask'd me if I wasn't deaf ; now are you dumb ? —Damn it say something, if it's only to contradict me.

Count. Monsieur Oldstock, je suis—I am your very good friend.

Sir O. You are Count ; and, what's more, I find you're my wife's friend.

La O. Sir Oliver, conscious as I am of the purity of my thoughts, I cou'd look down with contempt on every extravagance to which your jealous temper hurries you : but when I consider how the fairest reputations are every day injur'd from the slightest foundations—if it shou'd creep in to the public prints—

Sir O. I then I'll give you a little comfort—nobody will believe it.

La O. The cool malignity of his temper is even more

provoking than his jealousy—I can't bear to have been all my life reproach'd for nothing. [Exit.

Count. Monsieur Oldstock.

Sir O. Count Pierpoint, no apologies : I am not at all angry with you, nor do I entertain any suspicion of my wife—Love of admiration is her ruling passion ; and as long as she lives, she'll fancy herself an object of that admiration.

Count. Vous savez tres bien my passion pour Mademoiselle Harriet.

Sir O. I know every thing—I now see your view, in all this attention to Lady Oldstock : you imprudently made her your enemy, not knowing her character ; but you have very wisely rectified your mistake.—You see, Count, I'm a keen old fellow ; I haven't liv'd for nothing so many years in the world.

Count. Mon Dieu ! vous etes un Machiavel.

Sir O. Come along, Count.—But before you go, how do you think your friend Colonel Talbot stands affected as to matrimony ? Do you imagine, if a fine girl was thrown in his way, that he'd marry her ?

Count. Nothing more like, on my word ; il est un homme de gallantrie ; sans dout he has a de son, if that be no objection.

Sir O. Objection ! he shou'd marry for that very reason, and get more sons, if it was only to convince the world that he has mended his hand in the business.

End of the Fourth Act.

A C T V.

SCENE, *continues at Mandeville's*

Enter Harriet and Charlotte.

Harriet.

I AM half in love with Count Pierpoint for his noble be-

baviour—The moment matters were properly explain'd to him, he withdrew his claim instantly—Well, I never more will hear the French spoken ill of; they carry the point of honour to a pitch of heroism—but, Charlotte, what is the matter? Your spirits are intolérably depressed!

Char. You only fancy so from the unusual gaiety of your own.

Har. I have a great mind to send Captain Crevelt to you; you are just fit company for each other: two moping, melancholy fools.

Char. From some conversation I have had with him, I take it that he is in love.

Har. and I fancy I have a fair friend much in the same situation.

Char. He leaves town to day.

Har. Unless you issue your sovereign commands to the contrary.

Char. My sovereign commands! How you trifle: what influence have I over him?

Har. That influence which a beautiful woman will always have over a man of exquisite sensibility—Mandeville told me he was eternally talking of you.

Char. Talking of me! Lord; I wonder what the man can have to say about me!

Har. Oh! a thousand handsome things, I dare say: but if you wish to be satisfied as to the particulars, you may have them from the gentleman's own mouth, for here he comes; so I'll leave you together.

Char. Then you will be so ill natured?

Har. Good natured, sweet cousin.—

[Exit.

Char. Eternally talking of me! Whence; then, arose his sudden coldness and reserve, when I but too plainly discovered my partiality for him? Yet I may have been mistaken; a mind possessed of so much delicacy as his, might have deemed it criminal to address me on the score of love, at a time he thought I was intended for the son of his friend, Colonel Talbot—it is, it must be so—the pulses of my heart quicken at the thought—but he's here.

Enter Crevelt.

Creu. Miss Oldstock, as I mean to quit town this evening, and possibly may never see you again, I am come to solicit the honour of a few minutes conversation.

Char. Never see me again ! I hope you are not going back again to India.

Creu. No, madam, that is not my intention.

Char. Oh ! then I understand you ; it is that compound of every female excellence, of whom you spoke to me in such raptures, who is the cause of your leaving us.

Creu. I own it, Madam.

Char. But you talk'd of never seeing me again ; is your mistress that jealous creature as to exact such a promise from you ?

Creu. No, Madam ; that is a punishment I voluntarily inflict upon myself.

Char. You do say the most gallant things, with the most sombre countenance ; your wit and your face, Captain Crevelt, are the diamond and its foil ; the dark shade of the one, lends a more vivid glow to the other's sparkling brilliancy :—what an alteration the presence of your mistress wou'd make in your looks—cou'd you look thus in her presence ?

Creu. In the present state of my heart, I could not look otherwise.

Char. No ! not if she smil'd upon you ?

Creu. A smile from her wou'd raise me from despair : but that, Madam—Confusion ! yonder I see Colonel Talbot ; this is the second time to day he has found me in earnest conversation with her.

Char. I didn't think it possible till now, Colonel Talbot cou'd put me out of temper.

Creu. Will he not suspect that I am meanly stealing myself upon her affections, and attribute her dislike of his son to me ?—But he comes ; I cannot meet his eye in the present state of my feelings,—Adieu, dear Miss Oldstock !

Char. But are we never to meet again ?

H

Crev. It is a sacrifice, Madam, that pierces, and wounds my heart for ever; but honour and gratitude demand it.

[Exit.

Enter Colonel Talbot.

Col. Wasn't that Captain Crevelt, Miss Oldstock that parted from you?

Char. Yes, Sir; he has just taken his leave of me, and said I shall never see him again.

Col. There is a refinement in Crevelt's temper, that to strangers makes his conduct at times appear very unaccountable; but I fancy I have discovered the cause of this extraordinary resolution.

Char. And sure, Sir, you can prevail upon him to alter it?

Col. Then my lovely girl wishes he should alter his resolution?

Char. Oh, Sir! is it possible to be acquainted with so noble, so accomplish'd, so brave a youth, and not esteem him? Never see me more!—

Col. It is as I suspected; and, indeed, as I wish; for who but Crevelt is worthy of such a woman?—(Aside.) I hope, Miss Oldstock, you are now perfectly convinced, that I wou'd not purchase the greatest earthly happiness at the price of your peace of mind—highly as my pride, and natural affection wou'd be gratified to call you daughter, I trust I can turn my eye with manly firmness from the bright, the flattering prospect; and, resign'd to the dispensations of a Power who never afflicts his creature but for wise and good purposes, point out a man in every respect but birth and fortune deserving of you.

Char. Birth and fortune, Colonel! despicable distinctions? when nature asserts her superior claims to reverence, by ennobling the spirit, how low it lays the insolence of ancestry, and humbles the vanity of wealth.

Col. Madam, your words penetrate my very soul; with an aching, joyless heart, I look back to those imaginary scenes of happiness, fancy had painted in meeting with a son; the only pledge of love from the first object of my affections,

and whose image still warms this desolated bosom—Birth ! when I survey my own offspring, and behold poor Crevelt, I am ashamed to think so empty a thing as family pride had ever any influence over me.

Char. But you will prevail upon him to alter his resolution ?

Col. On one condition, Madam.

Char. What is that, Colonel ?

Col. That you will receive him as my adopted son—Your father's objections I will remove, by making him your equal in fortune.

Char. I don't know how to thank you, Colonel ; but, perhaps, he's already gone.

Col. Gone, without seeing me first, impossible ! but what says my sweet girl to the proposal I have made her ?

Char. You are so good, so disinterested, and so generous, that it is impossible not to acquiesce in any proposal of your's : but yet I will not make you an absolute promise ; mind that, Colonel ; till I find you have effectually accomplished my request, and induced Captain Crevelt to alter his resolution.

[*Exit.*

Col. Luckily, Sir Oliver has taken a very great liking to him ; and told me that he would insist upon his passing a few days at his house, previous to visiting his relations—Tho' Crevelt possesses the spirit of a lion, there is a gentleness and flexibility in his nature, which cannot resist sollicitation from a friend—Oh, my heart, be still ! tho' I am denied happiness in that quarter whence I fondly expected it, let me enjoy it as Heaven thinks proper to bestow the boon, by exerting my best efforts to impart it to the truly deserving.

Enter Count and Mandeville.

Count. J'espere, Monsieur Mandeville, you are perfectly satisfied—sur mon honneur, had I known Mademoiselle Harriet was engaged, I never would pay l'adresse.

Man. I believe it, Count ; and hope you will forgive the warmth, I was at first betrayed into.

Count. Mon Dieu ! il est l'évervescence d'un grabbe ame ; no brave man ever resign sa maitresse avec sang froid.

Col. Now, Mandeville, to completely remove your fears in regard to Harriet, know, I have made your peace with her uncle—would you believe it ? he actually proposed his daughter to me—however by the dint of argument, added to the influence of an old friendship, I at last brought him to reason.

Enter Sir Oliver.

Sir O. Colonel, Colonel, is this strict observance of treaty ? the carriages are waiting for us at the door—were we not all to set off for my house immediately ; did you not promise to pass ten days with me when you had contradicted me into consent at last ?

Count. Monsieur Oldsack, your niece was very pretty to be sure ; mais, mon Dieu ! votre fille be very pretty aussi ; me understand she will not marry young Monsieur Talbot, & mon ami the Colonel will not have her—eh bien, vat you say to me for von husband.

Sir O. With all my heart and soul, Count—I don't know a French gentleman of a long time I have taking such a liking to—damn me ! if you have not a fine roast-beef countenance.

Col. I fancy, Count, that lady's affections are also engaged.

Count. Je suis tres malheureux ! all de English lady be engaged ! but me be not surprized ; for if de foreigner set so much value on de English lady, vat must their own countrymen who know them better, do ?

Sir O. Why, what the deuce, Colonel, is all this ? You won't marry my daughter yourself ; you won't suffer your son, whatever her inclinations may be, to marry her ; and now you put the Count against her.

Col. Will you leave the lady to her own choice ?

Sir O. The worst of it is, I must do that—Count, a word in your ear—to her yourself—you're a devilish straight, well-looking fellow ; no appearance of frogs about you, except upon your coat—I shou'd like to see an union

between France and England, if it were only because it has been so long thought a contradiction in politics.

Count. I wish it vid all my heart. [Exit,

Col. How unsubstantial are all the projects of man, in whatever hope flatters him with happiness—this unhappy boy distracts me!

Sir O. Damn me! if I wou'dn't send him down into Wales or Yorkshire—for about fifteen pounds a year, you may get him decently boarded and clad and educated into the bargain.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. I have been in search of Mr. Malbot, Sir, since you spoke to me; and have just heard that he is gone to one Jacob Wilkins's, an innkeeper near Smithfield.

Col. I am exposed, you see, already.

Sir O. It's your own fault if you continue to be exposed; come along, Colonel; yonder I see Captain Crevelt putting the women into the carriages: We'll drive round by this Wilkins's; and take this young mohawk by surprise; the moment you get possession of him, banish him into Wales.

Col. I will myself go in person to Wilkins's; and from his own lips learn every particular respecting this unhappy youth, from the hour I left him in his care; and as you propose going home that way, Sir Oliver, I will trespass so far upon your patience as to request you will wait for me, whilst I make this inquiry.

Mand. Dear Sir, don't make yourself so unhappy.

Col. What is there wealth can purchase I cannot possess? my feelings are at once a satire, and a lesson to avarice.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE, a Room at Jacob Wilkins's.

Johnson and Mrs Wilkins discovered at Tea.

Mrs. Wilk. I'm sure I shall never forget the first time I was in this room; where you see Mr. Wilkins has his

Honor the Colonel's picture np —dear heart, what a handsome man he is ! it's a great pity he does not marry.

Johns. He's very much altered—consider, it's many years since that picture was painted ; his face is parched to the complexion of an old drum head, and his hair is perfectly silver.

Mrs. Wilk. What effect silver hair may have upon your great ladies I will not pretend to say ; but this I'll swear to ; bait your hook properly with gold, and a poor girl is a trout you may take with a single hair of any colour. If it was not for his money, do you think I'd ever have married old Jacob Wilkins ?

Johns. Why no, I hardly think you wou'd ; but why, my dear creature, has his name escaped your lips ? shou'd he possess such a treasure ! the man worthy of you shou'd always meet you with the ardour of a lover, and dart as I do with transport into your arms.

Enter Betty.

Betty. Oh ! madam ! madam ! my master is come home, and is raving like mad at your leaving the bar, and drinking tea up stairs.

Mrs. Wilk. He doesn't know I have any body with me ?

Bett. Lord ! ma'am, to be sure he doesn't ; I told him you were not well, and that you found the bar too cold for you.

Mrs. Wilk. You're an excellent girl

Johns. How the devil will you get me out ?

Bett. I hear his cough at the foot of the stairs—dear Madam, he's coming up.

Johns. S'death I'll run and shut myself up in that little room yonder.

Mrs. Wilk. By no means ! that's our own bed chamber ; his bureau is in it ; and as he pays his brewer to day, perhaps it's there he's going now for money.

Bett. I have it Madam ; I'll let down this window curtain, and the gentleman may get behind it ; if my master asks why it is down, you may say you were so ill, the light was too much for you.

[Drops the window curtain before Johnson.]

Mrs. Wilk. Such a servant is worth her weight in gold.

Bett. Here, Madam; tie this handkerchief about your head; appear very bad indeed there, Madam, let him come now when he pleases, we are ready for him.

[*Exit Betty.*]

Enter Wilkins and Amber.

Wilk. So, Mr. Amber; you have a curiosity to see the upper part of my house; you can't think how pleasant it is; my wife can tell you what a prospect there is on my upper story.

Amber. Poor Mrs. Wilkins is quite muffled up; she's very bad, poor woman; I'm sorry we disturb her.

Wilk. Why, Fanny, my love, what's the matter? you were very well when I went out.

Mrs. Wilk. I have been seized all of a sudden, with such a terrible pain in one side of my face I can hardly get my words out.

Wilk. I am sorry to hear this, Fanny—but what wiseacre has let this curtain down? I can't bear to shut out the light of a fine day.

Mrs. Wilk. Has the brute a mind to be the death of me?

[*Seizing him by the arm.*]

Wilk. Will it do you any good to keep me in the dark?

Mrs. Wilk. To be sure it will when I can't bear the light.

Amber. Friend Wilkins, friend Wilkins, the light is too much for her.

Mrs. Wilk. You're a considerate man Mr. Amber, and I dare say make an excellent husband.

Wilk. Well, well, then let the curtain remain down—come, Fanny, give your old Jacob a kiss.

Mrs. Wilk. I'm too fond of you, Jacob, and you take advantage of that.

Wilk. No, but I don't—kiss me again, you fond fool, it will do you good.

Amber. Ah! you're a happy couple; but you take the right method to be so, by giving way to one another.

Wilk. But now we are up stairs, friend Amber, sit down, and I'll go bring some money out of the next room and pay you.

Mrs. Wilk. I beg of you, Jacob, to take him down stairs and pay him; even your talking sets my head distracted.

Wilk. My dear, I shan't be two minutes settling with him; it will affront him if you turn him out of the room; you shall have the place to yourself immediately. *[Exit.]*

Re-enter Betty.

Bett. Madam, you're undone; if you don't come down stairs immediately; Ned, the new waiter, saw Mr. Johnson, and he as good as told me he'd acquaint my master.

Mrs. Wilk. What shall I do? I'm afraid to leave the room.

Bett. You needn't stop a minute; it's only squeezing Ned's hand, and slipping a sly half guinea into it, and all will be right.

Mrs. Wilk. Oh! Betty, I wish he was well out of the house—you'll excuse me, Mr. Amber, a little; I'm wanted down stairs. *[Exeunt Mrs. Wilkins and Betty.]*

Amb. Don't notice me, child, business must be minded; but let me see; suppose I sign my receipt, and have it ready for him.

[Taking out his pocket book and inkhorn.]

Enter Wilkins.

Wilk. Here is the money, my old boy; have you got your receipt ready?

Amb. I was going to sign it: but my eyes are so dim I can't see with that curtain down.

Wilk. As my wife's not here to complain of the light, I'll draw it up for you. *Draws up the curtain.*

Amb. That will do, I see plain enough now.

Wilk. And so do I too—Oh! the jezable.

Enter Mrs. Wilkins.

Mrs. Wilk. Ruined!

Amb. My dear Mr. Wilkins I beg ten thousand pardon

for letting so much light into the room, but I declare I cou'd not see to write my receipt.

Wilk. Well, Mr. Johnson! what brought you here; what have you to say for yourself; are you come to rob my house?

Amb. Oh! oh! I fear the dimness of my eyes have made others too clear sighted—but, friend Wilkins, don't be too hasty in judging.

Wilk. S'death and fite, man, shan't I believe my own eyes?

Amb. Not always—we are all apt to be suspicious at times—I'll wish you a good evening—there is my receipt: the fondest couples will spar now and then—but I never like to meddle in family quarrels.—Wilkins, you certainly have a fine prospect on your upper story.—Good evening, good Mrs. Wilkins. [Exit.

Wilk. Go, Madam; pack up your alls; and leave my house immediately; if you are in want of a morsel of bread, it wou'd give me pleasure to refuse it to you. As for you, Sir, I'll take care your business shall be done with Colonel Talbot—I'll see you both beggars, and that will be some satisfaction to me.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Colonel Talbot is coming up stairs, Sir, to speak to you.

Johns. Confussion! I'm undone!

Enter Colonel Talbot.

Col. Johnson, here!

Wilk. Yes, Sir, Johnson; your worthy gentleman is here on a visit to that wretch my wife.

Mrs. Wilk. Wretch, Mr. Wilkins!

Wilk. Yes, Madam, an ungrateful wretch.

Col. I'm sorry, Johnson—for this; I was given to understand you were come in search of my son.

86 HE WOULD BE A SOLDIER.

Mrs. Wilk. Wretch! I'll discover all, if I'm ruined for ever. (*Aside.*) He's not your son, Sir—

[*Going up to the Colonel.*]

Wilk. Devil! Devil! what is she going to say?

Col. Not my son! speak again, woman.

Wilk. But dear Colonel, fore you won't believe what this wicked woman will say?

Col. Away, villain, and let me hear her—alarmed nature starts up in my heart, and opens a thousand ears to listen to her.

Mrs. Wilk. He lost your son, Sir, when he was a boy of twelve years old; and you may be sure, Sir, it wasn't the kindest usage made the child leave him; the booby he palmed upon you is his own. What a terrible thing it is to lose my character, when I sent for Mr. Johnson for no other reason, I'm sure, but to tell him every thing; and for fear he might not believe me, I hid him behind that curtain, that he might hear my husband himself confess it.

[*Sobs and cries.*]

Johns. [*Coming forward*] This is the real state of circumstances, I assure your Honour.

Col. Unprincipled, inhuman villain! let me hear the whole truth from your own lips, or by every power that's sacred and divine, this moment is your last.

Wilk. Dear Sir, put up your sword, and I'll tell you every thing—What she says is partly true; your son strayed from me when he was about twelve years old; but had he been my own, I couldn't have used him better: as a proof of it, his mother, in her last illness, came, as she often did, privately to see him; and was so well pleased with my wife's and my treatment of her son, that she gave me a fifty-pound Bank note—I shall never forget the day; it was the last time I ever saw her: she hung a small picture of herself, set in gold, about the child's neck, and wept bitterly over him.

Col. Can you produce that picture?

Wilk. Your son took it with him; he was so fond of it, I could never keep it out of his hands but by locking it up; which I sometimes did, as the severest of all punishments I could inflict upon him.

Col. I must have better proof this tale is true before I let you escape that justice I fear is due to your wickedness.—*Johnson*, take him from my sight, and let him be secur'd; I cannot bear to look at him.—Tell the company waiting for me in carriages at the door, to come in: for I am so agitated, and anxious for more particulars, I cannot quit this detested spot.

Johns. They are here, Sir.

[*Exeunt Johnson, Wilkins, and wife.*]

Enter Crevelt, Mandeville, Charlotte, Harriet, Sir Oliver, Lady Oldstock, and Count.

Crev. Dear Sir, what is the matter? Observing a confusion in the house immediately after you went in, we were alarmed for your safety.

Col. Oh, *Crevelt*! I am the unhappiest of fathers; that creature whom you all suppose my son is not so.

Char. Good fortune be prais'd!

Col. He's son to the fellow who keeps this house—He says, my poor child stray'd from him when a boy; but this tale is so improbable, that I rather fear he has fall'n a victim to this fellow's villany and avarice.

Crev. Dear Sir, compose yourself, and hope human nature cannot be so deprav'd; it wrings my heart to see you in this distress—But who is this villain?

Col. His name is *Wilkins*.—When I committed my child to his care, he lived at *Henly*: he pretends he lost him at twelve years old; and, oh! agony to think! if he, indeed, be living, he is at this moment a wandering outcast and a beggar.

Crev. Merciful heaven! What do I hear? Can it be possible! Shall I, in my lov'd and honour'd patron, find a fond and living father! Sir, did that man lose a son of yours at twelve years of age?

Col. Yes, *Crevelt*; I have no son but you now.

Crev. I am your son, Sir—your happy son! that son you lost.

Col. You! You, *Crevelt*!

Crev. Yes, Sir, the veteran whose name I bear, took me with him at the age you mention from Henly; where I lived with the man you have just named, whom I always thought my father; it was the pride of poor Crevelt's heart to have me believed his son: I bore his name, and publicly acknowledged him as my father; for you, Sir, could not have lov'd me better; his dying request to me was, still to retain the name of Crevelt, and never forget the man who made me a soldier.

Char. O! Harriet. There is a cord of delight in my heart never touch'd before: and sure, he who made that heart, now moves its springs to ecstacy by the finger of an angel.

Col. He talk'd of your taking with you a picture of your mother—had you ever any such thing!

Crev. I have it still, Sir, and ever wore it next my heart. (*Producing the picture from his bosom.*) You see the frame is shattered;—it was by a musquet ball the day every body thought I was kill'd.

Col. It is indeed your mother; and see here those specks under the eye; are they my child's blood, or the tears of a fond parent?

(*Johnson to Caleb without.*) You must not come in; I have already explained every thing sufficiently.

Enter Caleb (very abruptly) and Johnson.

Ca. I tell you I will come in: zounds! will nobody father me?

Col. Young man you have been deceived; you are Wilkins's son, not mine.

Ca. Pho, pho! Father, do you think I know no better?

Johns. If you don't come out this moment, and no longer disturb my master, I'll take you by the shoulder.

Ca. Why here's a fellow for you—forget's he is talking to a captain!

Col. That is a rank you are so utterly unfit for, that it would only expose you to unhappiness and ridicule; therefore your commission shall be sold; and for being one day

my son, the purchase money shall be appropriated to setting you up in business.

Johns. Well, what keeps you now?

Ca. You are in a devil of a hurry, Mr. Johnson; I find I must put up with old Jacob again; but let me ask you one question, an't I to be entitled to half-pay for my services.

Johns. You shall have full pay if you do not go about your business. *[Shakes his cane at him.]*

Ca. Well, if I can't be a half-pay Captain I'll be a no-pay captain—for once a captain and always a captain.

[Exit Caleb.]

Sir O. Captain Crevelt—I beg your pardon, captain Talbot, give me your hand; you want nothing now but a wife, and if my daughter Charlotte—

Count. Eh bien? Monsieur Chevalier, you have forgot?

Sir O. Why, no. Count, I have not forgot; but you must know, whatever my respect for you may be, there is not that man living whose alliance I so much desire as colonel Talbot's; besides, I understand there is another branch of the family of my mind.

Count. Chevalier, I love and I respect the English, and by gar me vil have a wife among you.

Mand. It is not in words to express my pleasure—to make a bosom friend, and find a near relation, in less time than others form a common acquaintance, overflows my heart with transport.

Lady O. I could wish also to shew how this affecting discovery touches me, if I was not apprehensive, Sir Oliver, of your unfortunate suspicious temper.

Sir O. Captain Talbot, be so good as to step this way—do give my wife a kiss; I know, my dear, your lips itch for it; and, with all her faults, believe me, she has a heart that beats in unison to the feelings of all present, and a tear for misery and friendship.

Col. Tal. Miss Oldstock, it is your father's wish and mine to unite our families—now that I have a son I can propose to you, there is only your acceptance of him necessary to make me happy.

HE WOULD BE A SOLDIER.

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Char. Why, Sir, if the gentleman has but courage to speak for himself—

Sir O. As I don't expect the pleasure of contradiction from either party on this occasion, I'll join their hands, (*Joining their hands*) without waiting for an answer—there—Colonel, you are now one of my family.

Col. Tal. That assurance, Sir Oliver, seals, and completes my happiness—You Mandeville, shall share a portion of my fortune as a son, and may happiness still wait on you and your lovely Harriet—and now (*Addressing the audience*), if this court-martial, to whom we appeal, acquit us with honour, I shall bless the hour my boy said, "He would be a Soldier."

F I N I S.



EPILOGUE.

WRITTEN BY THE AUTHOR OF THE COMEDY, AND
SPOKEN BY MRS. POPE.

NOW critic Jove the scale aloft suspends ;
On whose dread beam the poet's fate depends :
Ye gods above, high arbiters of wit,
Who on your shilling thrones in council sit ;
You I implore, for our poor bard afraid,
To grant celestial, upper-gall'ry aid ;
If you approve, with Cato I shall cry
The gods take care of poets in the sky !
As for the ladies—they'll sure bear my pray'r,
New charms good-nature lends the fairest fair ;
Besides, I hardly think they can be foes,
To a fond maid who a brave soldier chose.
Who like a soldier charms the fair one's eyes,
The queen of beauty was a soldier's prize ?
In love, as war, the brave man best succeeds,
Our sex reveres that valour which it needs.
Ye beaux, so finely waisted now a days,
That one wou'd almost swear you put on stays ;
You, I confess create no great alarm,
You hav'nt spirit to do good, or harm.
But yonder I espy some dangerous faces ;
Good critics, I entreat your favouring graces ;
All I request is, when a fault's set down,
Its neighbouring beauty may be told the town ;
But after this, if you attempt to growl,
I'll excommunicate you, every soul !
In my lawn sleeves and shirt, I'll come so big,
In every thing a bishop, but his wig :
Nay, if you don't, an army I will bring
Of bishops, who may crown the greatest king :
Their sleeves of lawn, the down-wings of the dove ;
Their sash, the cestus of the queen of love :
With aid like this, and aid you'll own divine,
Who wou'd not think success were surely mine ?
In anxious hope I wait the dread decree,
That must be final both to bard and me.